

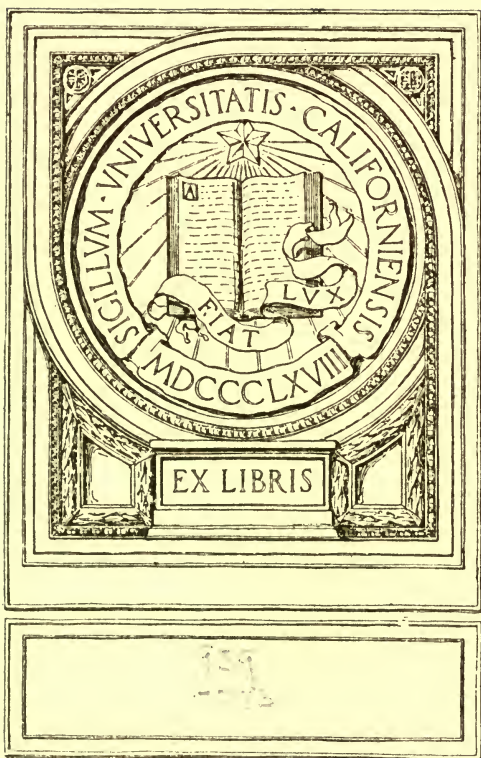
# POEMS

BRIAN HOOKER

UC-NRLF



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## POEMS





# POEMS

By BRIAN HOOKER



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## LILACS IN THE CITY

Amid the rush and fever of the street,  
The snarl and clash of countless quarrelling bells,  
And the sick, heavy heat,  
The hissing footsteps, and the hateful smells,  
I found you, speaking quietly  
Of sunlit hill-horizons and clean earth;  
While the pale multitude that may not dare  
To pause and live a moment, lest they die,  
Swarmed onward with hot eyes, and left you  
there—  
An armful of God's glory, nothing worth.

You are more beautiful than I can know.  
Even one loving you might gaze an hour  
Nor learn the perfect flow  
Of line and tint in one small, purple flower.  
There are no two of you the same,  
And every one is wonderful and new—  
Poor baby-blossoms that have died unblown,  
And you that droop yourselves as if for shame,  
You too are perfect. I had hardly known  
The grace of your glad sisters but for you.

POEMS

You myriad of little litanies!  
Not as our bitter piety, subdued  
To cold creed that denies  
Or lying law that severs glad and good;  
But like a child's eyes, after sleep  
Uplifted; like a girl's first wordless prayer  
Close-held by him who loves her—no distress  
Nor storm of supplication, but a deep,  
Dear heartache of such utter happiness  
As only utter purity can bear.

For you are all the robin feels at dawn;  
The meaning of green dimness, and calm noons  
On high fields far withdrawn,  
Where the haze glimmers and the wild bee croons.  
You are the soul of a June night:—  
Intimate joy of moon-swept vale and glade,  
Warm fragrance breathing upward from the ground,  
And eager winds tremulous with sharp delight  
Till all the tense-tuned gloom thrills like a sound—  
Mystery of sweet passion unafraid.



*LILACS IN THE CITY*

O sweet, sweet, sweet! You are the proof of all  
That over-truth our dreams have memory of  
That day cannot recall:

Work without weariness, and tearless love,  
And taintless laughter. While we run  
To measure dust, and sounding names are hurled  
Into the nothingness of days unborn,  
You hold your little hearts up to the sun,  
Quietly beautiful amid our scorn—  
God's answer to the wisdom of this world.

## BALLADE OF THE DREAMLAND ROSE

Where the waves of burning cloud are rolled  
On the further shore of the sunset sea,  
In a land of wonder that none behold,  
There blooms a rose on the Dreamland Tree  
That stands in the Garden of Mystery  
Where the River of Slumber softly flows;  
And whenever a dream has come to be,  
A petal falls from the Dreamland Rose.

In the heart of the tree, on a branch of gold,  
A silvern bird sings endlessly  
A mystic song that is ages old,  
A mournful song in a minor key,  
Full of the glamour of faery;  
And whenever a dreamer's ears unclose  
To the sound of that distant melody,  
A petal falls from the Dreamland Rose.

*BALLADE OF THE DREAMLAND ROSE*

Dreams and visions in hosts untold  
Throng around on the moonlit lea:  
Dreams of age that are calm and cold,  
Dreams of youth that are fair and free—  
Dark with a lone heart's agony,  
Bright with a hope that no one knows—  
And whenever a dream and a dream agree,  
A petal falls from the Dreamland Rose.

ENVOI

Princess, you gaze in a reverie  
Where the drowsy firelight redly glows;  
Slowly you raise your eyes to me. . . .  
A petal falls from the Dreamland Rose.

## A SITUATION

Not that I mean to make trouble. . . . All the same,  
I could reach him so easily, easily—just one glance,  
One word sometimes, to awaken the whole romance—

It's enough to tempt a Minerva to play the game . . .  
And she so careful never to give me a chance!

He's a younger cousin, or some relation of hers;  
(She's older than I) and the two are really friends,  
Equal, intimate comrades—and there it ends:  
Never a thought of anything better or worse,  
And nearly the same with me, but . . . that  
depends.

No one I want—just a big, dear, innocent boy  
With a man's blunt will and elaborate honesties,  
And the arms and back of a man, and sweet boy's  
eyes  
Easily brightened with laughter or darkened with  
joy—  
Inexperienced, eager, and not too wise!

Nothing to rouse me deeply, or hold me long—  
I have buried my dead, and seen my share of men—  
But the wish comes back upon me again and again  
To awaken the man in the boy, and find him  
strong . . .  
And a horrible sick little shudder now and then,

## A SITUATION

As he sits with his hand on hers, as a matter of course,  
Or sprawls on the floor with his head against her  
knee

Wholly unconscious, forgetting the He and She,  
Which somehow, nevertheless, has a subtle force  
When their wills or opinions oppose and their eyes  
agree.

If she would only not be quite so motherly!  
Patronizingly watching us day by day—  
When his eyes follow on as I move, and rest where  
I stay,  
Or his voice drops half a tone below the brotherly—  
Off goes the conversation another way!

As if she said: "Come look at my lovely flowers—  
Please do not pluck any; I never do, you know,  
Only I like to plant them and watch them grow". . .  
If the two were boy and girl in their first mad hours,  
I should laugh, and help them, and bless them, and  
let them go!

And yet . . . What a foolish waste there will be of  
beauty  
When he finds the one conventional child for him,  
(With an untaught voice, and elbows youthfully  
slim)

Who follows him stupidly down the path of duty,  
So blind with her own new glory that his grows  
dim!

*POEMS*

To make him take me, knowing myself the first—  
I who could measure his utmost power of giving,  
I who could prize his virginal believing,  
I who have learned the lore of the best and worst . . .  
Why, it would make the life I have lived worth  
living!

Only—have I still anything left to spare?  
Well, an education in love, to the last degree,  
Is cheap at the price of a shrivelled vanity.  
I at least ought to think so—I've had my share.  
Not that I mean to make trouble, but . . . we  
shall see.

## A LITTLE PERSON

Sunny hair and eyes of wonder,  
Baby-lips apart,  
Vivid mother-breast, whereunder  
Laughs a childish heart—  
What have you to do with learning  
Wiser bliss or woe?  
Take our gold; the cost of earning  
You shall never know.

You shall joy as for another,  
Find it strange to weep,  
Play at being wife and mother,  
Dream, and fall asleep;  
All we toil for, all we doubt of,  
All we yearn to see,  
All our hopes have sneered us out of—  
You shall prove, and be.

You shall purify deceiving  
With a glad disdain,  
Beautifully unbelieving  
Meet the eyes of pain,  
Dance through hells undreamed-of, bringing  
Benefits unguessed:  
Unto shame, a sound of singing,  
Unto passion, rest.

*POEMS*

Sunny hair and eyes of wonder,  
    Baby-lips apart,  
Vivid mother-breast, whereunder  
    Laughs a childish heart,  
Soul un sinful, unforgiven,  
    Voice of dawn and dew—  
God one morning, glad of heaven,  
    Laughed—and that was you!



## ONEIROS

Out of the hush and darkness of deep sleep  
Your face came toward me: first a nebulous gleam  
Like some dim star beheld with eyes that weep;  
Then wavering nearer in a misty flame,  
As the moon falters up through some dark stream

When the wind moves at midnight. With you came  
A breath of music, faint and far away,  
And light and music somehow seemed the same:  
The one, all hope that longing turns to fear;  
The other, all men dream and dare not say.

Slowly the brightness broadened, and drew near,  
And orbbed into the wonder of your face;  
While the sound swelled and echoed trembling-clear—  
The minor dominant of a wild desire  
Beating the sullen bars of time and space;

And with your coming, ever the sound rose higher,  
Quivering with extremity of sweet,  
And I could see your eyes; and the dim fire  
That framed your face became your golden hair  
Falling in streams of Summer to your feet;

*POEMS*

And the wild melody shook earth and air,  
You ever drawing closer, till at last  
Music and brightness grew too great to bear—  
Then suddenly the yearning cadence caught  
The chord it longed for, and I held you fast.

Then the dream changed. Heavy with heat and  
fraught  
With sighs of slumbering roses, hung the gloom  
Over us. Little breezes passed, and caught  
Sweetness from bower and flower, and wandered  
on  
Through murmuring groves and beds of hidden  
bloom.

Hard by, a marble palace rose, that shone  
With pearly balconies and columns tall  
Sprayed into arch like fountains turned to stone;  
And from a lower window deep-embayed  
Two bars of yellow light shot forth, to fall

On your white dress and shining head, and made  
A saint of you, and passed unwillingly,  
Paling to amber where they half displayed  
Mysterious gardens darkling down to meet  
The starlit laughter of the distant sea.

## ONEIROS

Down with the light swept the swift-pulsing beat  
Of eager music, and the yellow bars  
Were shaken and shaded as the flying feet  
Of dancers crossed the light. All throbbed in  
time—  
The music, and our hearts, and the hot stars.

Woes of dead lovers in an ancient rhyme,  
Deeds of dead heroes when the world was young,  
Strife of great souls that vainly strove to climb  
Steeps of sheer joy where only angels tread—  
Ached in that music, finding heart and tongue.

And the old childhood feelings I thought dead  
Came back upon me, seeming strange and new:  
Love of I knew not what, and causeless dread,  
And vague desire; all old things passed away  
Returned fulfilled, and all found form in you.

Under a huge dim-towering tree I lay,  
You bending over me. I knew my sight  
Had never fallen on your face by day—  
Yet had I known you well, and sought you long,  
Loved in forgotten dreams for many a night;

POEMS

And you were soft and dear, like an old song,  
And strange as moonlit clouds. Love strung to  
    pain  
Tightened your cheek, and made your breath grow  
    long  
And your lips brighten. Tears were in your  
    eyes,  
And in your hair, the scent of Summer rain.

And as I held you close, we seemed to rise  
And float away over the waves of sound;  
And all things but ourselves were fantasies:  
    Death an old lie; and Life an empty quest;  
And Time a blind mole burrowing underground.

Then our eyes drew you down. Your warm lips  
    pressed  
On mine with eager kisses: all the dark  
Was full of you: through your quick-panting breast  
    I felt your heart slow beating against my own  
Like the heat-pulses in a dying spark—

Then the dream faded. Like a petal blown  
From some tall flower, you floated down—your  
    whole  
Love in your eyes, and your white arms up-thrown—  
    Blurred to a hazy glimmer far withdrawn,  
So faint I only seemed to see your soul,

## ONEIROS

Faded, and flashed, and vanished. . . . And the dawn  
Burst in upon me, and I woke. Yet still  
Truth seemed a shadow of the dream foregone;  
And all brave hopes, your glamour cast before;  
And all good thoughts, the echo of your will.

And still you help me. Shall we meet once more,  
Out of the hush and darkness of deep sleep,  
In the day-world's tempestuous toil and war?  
And if I find you . . . will you ever be  
As the warm firelight of my home to me,  
Or some dim star beheld with eyes that weep?

## A BALLAD OF SIN

A King there was, both good and great,  
That was lord of a fair country;  
And a certain man within his realm  
Did scorn to the King's majesty.

For he paid no tribute to the King,  
And he laughed away the law of the land,  
And day by day did rob and slay  
By craft of heart or might of hand.

The King said: " He hath broke my law  
And in my realm done evilly;  
Yet, lest some need have driven him,  
He shall have gold and lands in fee."

He took the King's good lands and gold,  
And squandered all in foolish wise;  
For he pledged the lands and spent the gold,  
On courtesans and courtesies.

The King said: " He hath lost my gifts,  
And spent my goods in harlotry;  
Yet folly may be force unyoked—  
He shall have men to fight for me."

*A BALLAD OF SIN*

He took the soldiers of the King,  
And led them forth to burn and kill,  
And ever his Lord's own banner bore  
To show he wrought by the King's will.

The King said: " He hath shamed my crown,  
And stained my name with villainy;  
Yet . . . treason is but want of faith—  
He shall have eyes that he may see."

The man rode forth one summer morn  
Across a black and barren land,  
And a girl-child stood in his way  
Holding a white rose in her hand.

The child laughed up in the man's eyes,  
And held her rose for him to take.  
He smiled a stale smile, and passed by—  
She wept as if her heart would break.

Then the King grieved, saying: " Alas,  
That my realm harbour such as he!  
There is no more that I may give,  
For now he hath dishonoured Me."

## ECHOES

In the old room, when May is ending,  
And day descending in the West,  
Into a golden stillness blending  
My memories of worst and best,

Yesterday clings about to-morrow,  
Flinging a charm on time and place,  
Till calm lights and pale shadows borrow  
Frail outlines of your vivid face;

And your voice calls from wall and rafter,  
Out of the long-forgotten years—  
A song that sorrow follows after,  
A laughter tremulous with tears.



## PLUS ULTRA

Love, while our love was yet unborn,  
And your lips, doubting you, denied  
Gifts that should make you glorified  
In revelation won and worn—  
Still in your virgin eyes I knew  
God's promise of the joy of you  
Beyond your anger to subdue,  
Your maidenhood to hide.

Now, when your lips have granted all  
Glory that may be dreamed or done  
Between the courses of the sun,  
In nature's deep confessional,—  
I see, where wonder underlies  
The wisdom of your wifely eyes,  
Unmasterable mysteries  
That never may be won.

## FORSITAN

Labour for Love; thy labour shall be vain.

Conquer it; God shall laugh, and feed thee dust.

Deserve it; thou shalt clasp a broken trust,  
Learning a wise unfaith. For joy or pain  
Love falleth wantonly, as falls the rain  
Alike upon the just and the unjust.

Take all unclean that lieth to thine hand—

There is no shame but wherewith Love may be.

Be pure—thou fool, what shall it profit thee?

Thine uttermost endeavour may command  
Upon the shore a grain the less of sand,  
A drop the more of water in the sea.

Because the heart of Love is hidden higher

Than ever poet sang or prophet saw,

Beyond all dream of glory and of awe,—

The very holiness of thy desire

Shall blind thee to the gold within the fire,

And hold thee from the best. This is the law.

Therefore deserve; give wholly; do no ill;

Labour, and overcome. So the one kiss

May overflow a greater soul with bliss

More curiously sought; or, if Chance will

Thou shalt, remembering old beauty, still

Worthily suffer, knowing what Love is.

## WOMANHOOD

Love to a lady said that kneeled before him,  
Fain of his light and of his glory fain:  
“ Who ask of Love must manifold restore him  
For little joy, long pain.”

Swiftly she answered: “ Lord, put forth thy power.”  
(O, and the wonder of her lips and eyes!)  
“ Let me know all. So I but have mine hour,  
What matter for the price?”

Love laughed, and blessed her, saying: “ The full  
measure  
Of all my sweet I give thee utterly;  
And in thy pain a joy beyond all pleasure,  
Seeing it comes of me.”

## GOLDEN-EYES

Strange, that the thing I am should know  
The fulness and the perfect flower  
Of that old self, long lives ago! . . .

—It must be, when the flesh has died,  
The soul turns sunward a new side,  
And old lights darken. So that hour  
By its own soul-fire glimmers through—  
I wrought such glory out of you  
As death was frail to overpower!

I was just entering the hall  
To greet my captive. . . . All before  
Blurs into gloom beyond recall—  
Until I see you standing there,  
The slant light maddened in your hair,  
And in your eyes no fear. Once more  
I breathe deep, hear my scabbard ring  
On the brown stones, and feel the sting  
Of the salt breeze through the high door.

I claimed you mine. You railed, and scoffed.  
—Your lover must be near at last—  
And all the while, I thought how soft  
That grand white breast of yours would feel  
Close-crushed against my linked steel. . . .

## GOLDEN-EYES

You laughed. A sudden passion-blast  
Shook all my blood into one fire,  
And in a glory of desire  
I caught at you, and held you fast.

Under my kisses and my strength  
You raved. Almost I feared you, when  
You tried to blind me. Then, at length,  
You changed: the hero-mother rose  
Into your golden eyes; close, close  
You held me, kissed me once—and then  
Folk shouted, and a trumpet blew  
Loudly. I reeled forth, drunk with you,  
To struggle in the press of men.

They must have slain me in that fight.  
There was a ship with a high prow,  
And a man's face, foam-lipped and white. . . .  
Then the veil falls, and leaves me—here:  
Worthless, with none to hold me dear,  
No quiet hand upon my brow—  
I am but half a man alone! . . .  
And you, that once were all my own,  
Ah, Golden-Eyes, where are you now?

## FRAGRANCES

When you pass by me swiftly,  
For a moment all the air  
Thrills with the breath of your passing  
And the summer of your hair.

So, in the dark and the distance,  
There comes between sigh and sigh  
A breeze and a breath of beauty,  
As the thought of you drifts by.

## EVERYMAN'S EPITAPH

Listen: I knew in life and breath  
Your darkest void, your purest flame;  
For I have loved, and smiled at death,  
And I have feared, alone with shame.

Therefore this word I leave with you  
Who flush and faint as I have done:  
*Doubt not that all good things are true,  
And the world fair to live upon.*

## FOOLS' WISDOM

You thought you loved me, Dear—until you read  
In me what Love was; then That Other came  
Who won your knowledge. So your dream was dead,  
And my reality was put to shame.

It is a bitter thing to have no worth,  
To pour oneself out utterly, in vain;  
But—these things are of earth, and turn to earth:  
The lamp of pleasure and the shade of pain.

“Be wise and manly; leave such thoughts alone.”  
The wise ones of this world laugh Love away,  
Criticise God, and play with bits of stone—  
I do not wish to be as wise as they;

Only to love you perfectly, and wait,  
Nor stain with any doubt our joy to be.  
Never is but to-morrow. When we mate,  
Dear, we shall still have all eternity.

## BALLADE OF FAREWELL

New roads to fare, new toils to overthrow,  
New fields, made rich with fern and floweret,  
And beckoning seas where brave winds merrily blow  
Over the sun-bright waves of dawn—and yet,  
Never one sun rose but another set. . . .  
Wherefore, beseech you, count me not as they  
Who shun the venture and avoid the fray,  
Though I should pause within the empty hall,  
By the old hearth bow down to dream and pray,  
And bid at last a long farewell to all.

Dim elms deepen the summer gloom below,  
Tangling the drowsy breeze in a soft net  
Of slowly waving leaves; an amber glow  
Streams out of many windows, over wet  
Green grass, gray tower, and vine-hung parapet;  
And careless gusts of song start up, and stray  
Among the shadows; the city's distant bray  
Softens; and happy voices clash and call  
One to another, as I turn away,  
And bid at last a long farewell to all.



*BALLADE OF FAREWELL*

Youth, and high hearts welcoming friend and foe,  
Careless of fear or failure; the clear jet  
And rainbow-spray of joyance; and the flow  
Of easy slumber to a morning met  
Blithely, fresh-eyed; madrigal, canzonet,  
Drink with glad boys and dance with maidens gay,  
Scorn of such laws as weaker souls obey—  
Carouse, adventure, dalliance, tryst, and brawl—  
Must we disown the sweetness of their sway,  
And bid at last a long farewell to all?

These things are ebbing from us: and although  
It is more wise to frolic than to fret,  
Good to strew garlands on the grave of woe,  
Good to drink deep of laughter, and forget  
Weariness, and chill twilights, and the debt  
Inexorable that even we must pay  
Who in the House of Life rejoice to stay—  
Nevertheless, we find the banquets pall,  
See the leaves wither, and the lights turn gray,  
And bid at last a long farewell to all.

POEMS

Wherefore, with half my days foregone, I go  
Now to begin true labour. I regret  
Only the song unborn, the unbent bow  
Whose quarry leaps unscathed. Nor dare I let  
My heart shrink from the turmoil and the sweat;  
For even already have I seen decay  
The glamour and dew-freshness of the May,  
And felt a weary body faint and fall,  
Remembering how I must fear delay,  
And bid at last a long farewell to all.

ENVOI

Princes of Mirth! Let no power disarray  
The pageants and fair trappings of our play,  
Until we turn our faces to the wall,  
Smile down the glimmering slopes of yesterday,  
And bid at last a long farewell to all.

*New Haven, 1909.*

**THE WHITE CAT: A FAIRY-POEM**



## THE WHITE CAT: A FAIRY-POEM

There was a King's Son, once upon a time,  
Dwelling in a fair country, far away  
Even on the other side of Fairyland,  
Beyond the mountains and the sea. Through all  
His young life, he had never sought in vain,  
But what he asked was given; yet none the less  
The King's Son was not happy. Day by day,  
The King his father, that had been himself  
A king's son, gave him horse and hawk and hound,  
And taught him to ride straight and keep his spear  
Sharp, and his armour shining, to be strong  
In war, and swift upon the hunt, and wise  
In judgment, honouring the law. The Queen  
His mother, that had been a princess, gave him  
Silks and gems, a warm hearth and a soft bed,  
A table rich with spices and old wine,  
Red gold and ready servants; and taught him how  
To speak fair, understanding women's eyes,  
And sing sweet songs, charming the hearts of men,  
And be a prince in all. And his old nurse,  
That once had been a fairy in her youth—  
A brown and twisted witch like a dead tree—  
Gave him a great white cat, that all day long  
Drowsed in the sun or dozed before the fire,  
With emerald eyes half shut, and paws turned in,

## POEMS

Nor ever purred nor rubbed against his knee—  
But when the King's Son called her beautiful,  
Yawned, and looked elsewhere. And she told him  
tales

Of elves and giants, wizards, trolls, and gnomes,  
And sleepless dragons, breathing flame, that kept  
Watch over hidden gold, and spellbound kings,  
And lone princesses in enchanted towers—  
Wonderful stories out of Fairyland,  
With all the sorry parts left out of them.  
And yet the King's Son was not happy. True,  
He sang and laughed, rode merrily to the hunt,  
And sat in council proudly. Yet he lacked  
In all these, what should prove a use for all—  
A cause for fight, a dream behind the song—  
And having all things, wanted—Everything.

Now, it befell that while the King's Son slept  
One sweet midsummer midnight in the gloom  
Of his high chamber, the White Cat, that crawled  
Mousing amid the shadows, touched his hand  
In passing, and at the touch the King's Son sighed  
And stirred, opening his eyes. The moonlight fell  
Through leaves that breathed about his window, and  
lay

In two broad bars athwart the chamber floor;  
And between sleep and waking he beheld  
A milk-white Princess out of Fairyland  
Dancing under the moonbeams, glad as youth,

*THE WHITE CAT: A FAIRY-POEM*

Beautiful as the memory of a dream,  
And sweet as hope. Her eyes were like the dawn;  
Her hair was like the twilight; and she moved  
Like music over water. And the King's Son  
Looking upon her, felt his whole heart break  
For wonder and great love. Then suddenly,  
Ere he could move or speak, a shadow crossed  
The light, and a breeze brushed the leaves, and blew  
Balm from the drowsy gardens, and passed by;  
And the Prince, gazing where his joy had been,  
Saw only emptiness. And while he watched,  
Forth from the shadow stole the great White Cat,  
And yawned, stretching her claws out one by one,  
And shook her ears, and turned, and walked away  
Waving her plummy tail aloft in air.

But on the morrow, the Prince came before  
His father and his mother, saying:

“ Now

That I am one-and-twenty, and a man,  
It is full time I proved your gifts to me  
Upon some high endeavour; for I live  
As a fat hawk here, or a pampered hound,  
Doing all things with cause for doing none,  
Useless. But last night, waking suddenly  
And wavering on the brink of sleep, I saw  
Where the broad moonbeams fell from wall to wall,  
A milk-white Fairy Princess dancing there,  
Beautiful as the memory of a dream,

## POEMS

And sweet as hope. Her eyes were like the dawn;  
Her hair was like the twilight; and she moved  
Like music over water. And I knew,  
Gazing upon her, that my life was hers.  
And I shall follow her to Fairyland  
And find her, and possess her, or I die."

And the King answered:

"This is but a dream,  
Such as young blood dreams in the summer. Nay,  
By thine own speech I know it for a dream—  
Moon-maidens dancing! Use and uselessness!—  
Bide here till harvest, when our foemen spring  
Out of the south, ten thousand spears: that war  
Shall find thee use enow. Nevertheless,  
If thou must ride a-dreaming, take my sword.  
I won my kingdom with it years ago,  
But it shall never win thee thy desire."

And the Queen cried, clutching her mother-heart  
With one white hand:

"Child, there has fallen a spell  
Upon thee. Thou hast slept under the moon,  
And that breeds madness. Bide thou here, and let  
Wise doctors wash this vapour from thy brain.  
Are there no maids in our own country? Still,  
If thou must go a-maying, take my harp—  
I won my treasure with it, years ago,  
Yet it shall never charm thee to thy dream."





POEMS

And pointed out his way. But when they came  
To the huge wall of gold that guards the bounds  
Of Fairyland, its glimmering length flung far  
From dawn to sundown, and the gates aflame  
With amethyst and opal, whereupon  
Is written in a tongue old as the world:  
“ *Who enters here must seek his heart’s desire* ”—  
And overhead, hung by a single hair,  
A great sword shines and swings, trembling—she  
    stayed;  
And would not pass there till he went before,  
Then followed. And the King’s Son, entering, rode  
Through a glad country bright with sun, and fair  
With blossoms that before his charger’s feet  
Sprang up, and shed their fragrance, and fell down  
Fading behind him; and the low skies burned  
Purple and rose and saffron, as if the dawn  
Lingered and flushed the noonday; and the trees  
Reached forth green arms to him, and brushed his  
    cheek  
Like soft hands; and the breeze behind him shook  
With whispers, and in front through the warm green,  
White breasts flashed, and dark eyes glanced, and a  
    sound  
Of girlish laughter fled from tree to tree;  
And the sweet air sang in his blood like wine.  
And the King’s Son, riding, unslung his harp,  
And sang across the summer and the sun:

THE WHITE CAT: A FAIRY-POEM

“ Youth rides forth to-day!  
Lads of mettle rare,  
Ladies debonair—  
Will ye say him nay?  
Joy shall dance and play,  
Love shall clasp and cling,  
Through the glad array  
Of his following.

“ Over earth and air  
Flows the fire of spring,  
Filling everything,  
Thrilling everywhere;  
Shall a world so fair,  
Calling, be denied?  
Bid him dare to dare—  
Bid him mount and ride!

“ Round him in a ring  
Gather glorified—  
Every maid a bride,  
Every man a king—  
Wreaths and roses fling  
Down his conquering way;  
Laugh and kiss and sing—  
Youth rides forth to-day!”

## POEMS

And as the song closed, all around broke out  
A clapping of tiny hands, and all the air  
Filled with soft cries of pleasure; and he felt  
About his neck the clasp of invisible arms,  
And touch of bodiless lips upon his own;  
And shimmering winds flashed by, and caught his  
    cloak

And tugged his bridle. Only the White Cat  
Beside his stirrup paid no heed, but yawned,  
Curving her pink tongue, and looked elsewhere. Then,  
Far off a solitary trumpet rang  
From that which, glittering on the distant hills,  
Blazed like a lesser sun. Whither the Prince,  
Following his viewless guides across the plain  
Deep-spread with bloomy fragrance, was aware  
Of a tall castle all of glittering glass,  
Whose towers the clouds encrimsoned, and whose base  
The earth tinged living green; and its whole breadth  
Broke diamond-like into a myriad lights  
Of wall and buttress, porch and parapet,  
Cornice and battlement and balcony,  
And clustered columns branching into arch  
Like frozen spray; and the slant lights, and lines  
Tangled, and the clear substance of it all,  
So mazed his vision that he rode half blind  
Before the glare thereof, nor might discern  
The outer from the inner. But he saw,  
High on a fretted balcony that hung  
In one broad band of fire from tower to tower,

*THE WHITE CAT: A FAIRY-POEM*

A pearl-white Princess crowned with gold, and robed  
In purple. And her eyes were like the day;  
Her hair was like the summer; and she moved  
Like sunshine on the sea. And leaning down,  
She stretched her arms toward him, and cried his  
name,

Saying:

“ I weary of the brightness here.

Come.”

And with that, the King's Son gave one cry,  
Recognizing the vision of his dream,  
And spurred his charger to the gate, and seized  
The golden horn that hung there, and breathed deep,  
Then blew.

Slowly the drawbridge creaked and swung,  
Descending; the portcullis rose; the gates  
Opened, and down that shining pathway strode  
A monstrous giant, all in golden arms,  
Demanding what he sought; whereto the Prince:

“ Do battle for the Princess prisoned there.”

So the twain rushed together, while above,  
The Princess on her balcony laughed loud,  
And called, cheering them on; and the White Cat,  
That in the midmost branches of an elm  
Clung bristling, like a ball of thistledown,  
Hissed angrily. And the Giant heaved on high  
His mace, and at the first stroke, stooping, swung  
Against the charger's feet, and swept him down

## POEMS

Sidelong beneath his rider, as the scythe  
Topples the standing corn. But the King's Son  
Leaped clear, and found foothold, and sprang within  
The swing of the huge mace upon him; and then,  
Mindful at once of many a fairy tale—  
How giants all are weakest at the knee—  
And gathering his whole might into one stroke,  
Stabbed. And the Giant roared aloud, and swung  
Tottering a moment, then clanged down. His shield  
Boomed like a gong, and the ground under him  
Rang hollow, smitten by his golden arms,  
As though the earth were golden; and the sound  
Rolled bellowing from beneath, and jarred afar  
In subterranean thunder, and rumbled away  
Beyond the horizon. So the Giant fell,  
And heaved and groaned a moment, and lay still.

And the King's Son, amazed to have won the quest  
So easily, dizzy with joy, and strong  
In the surety of his triumph, turned, and strode  
Over the drawbridge, through the fiery arch  
Of those high gates, and crossed the echoing hall,  
And climbed the glassy stairway, where his dream  
Waited him. And he knelt before her feet.  
And kissed her hand, murmuring:

“Lo, I have come,  
Having seen thee and sought thee. Therefore follow  
me  
Home to my father's kingdom.”

*THE WHITE CAT: A FAIRY-POEM*

And she said,  
Smiling into his eyes:

“Wherefore?”

She seemed  
Rosier than he had seen her in his dream,  
And sturdier. Nevertheless his whole heart burned  
For rapture of her, and he rose, and flung  
His arms out, saying:

“I have fought, and slain  
The Giant.”

And she laughed, answering:

“What then?  
He is my Giant.”

And at that, the Prince,  
Empty of words and sick with a strange fear,  
Stood wavering, while the fabric of his dream  
Dissolved around him. At the last, he said  
Foolishly, hating the sound of his own speech:

“It is not so in any fairy tale.”

But while he spoke, the White Cat from beneath  
Cried warning; and he turned, and looking down  
Through glassy walls and floors, suddenly beheld  
The fallen Giant spring up, and rush within;  
And the halls resounded with him, ere he came  
Upon them, howling with laughter, and upswung  
His massy mace, and with one huge blow shattered  
The King's sword, and crushed down the King's Son.

POEMS

Then

The Princess and the Giant lifted him,  
And spoiled him of his arms, and bound him fast  
With golden chains, and prisoned him far down  
In a dim dungeon underneath the moat,  
As far below the green earth as from thence  
Even to the pinnacle of the tallest tower;  
And there, barren of sense and strength, he lay.

All day the White Cat, wandering forlorn  
Around the enchanted castle, sought in vain  
Her master; for her eyes, fitted for gloom  
Where men's eyes fail them, shrank from sun, and  
                  where

The glassy fortress reared its glittering height,  
Saw neither wall nor tower nor any form  
Nor substance: only a blind golden glare  
Unbearable. But when the sun sank down  
And the lights paled, rising, and rosily  
Flushed, lingering on the battlements, and night  
Fell, she crept forward very carefully  
To the moat's edge, and looking downward, saw  
Through fathoms of wan water and clear glass  
Where he lay, chained and prisoned. At that sight,  
She raised a dolorous cry, and would have gone  
To him, but shrank back frightened at the touch  
Of the chill water. And the King's Son heard  
Her wailing through his swoon, and seemed to hear



*THE WHITE CAT: A FAIRY-POEM*

The Princess crying to him for help; and so  
Waking, looked up through glassy wall and floor  
To a bright banquet chamber, where the twain,  
Crowned with red gold and garlanded with flowers,  
Feasted, Princess and Giant, laughing wild  
And sporting amorously; and his own arms  
Hung with a hundred others on the wall:  
Whereto they raised their cups, and pledged each  
other,

Embracing, and drank deep. Thereupon the Prince,  
Feeling his whole strength beaten back on him  
In one dry gust of agony, sprang, and brake  
The chains whose links fell, tinkling goldenly  
Like small bells; and he leaped upward, and swam  
Through glassy walls and floors as a diver climbs  
Through water, labouring, and won forth, and fled  
Headlong, dishonoured and disarmed, his sword  
Gone, and his charger slain, and his dead dream  
Festering within him. Only his harp remained,  
And the dull mirror at his girdle hung,  
And the White Cat, following him silently,  
Whereof he noted nothing, but rushed on  
Through glooms odorous with drowsy blossoms, whose  
breath

Seemed like her hair, and winds that cooled his brow  
Like her hands, and still lights that shone afar  
Most like her eyes whom he had found in vain,  
The Princess; and her face was everywhere  
Before him, beautiful with joy, and warm

## POEMS

With tenderness; and ever by her side  
The golden Giant grinned, and pawed her hair  
And pinched her cheek, while she laughed up, and lay  
Surrendering. And the burden of that sight  
So bore upon him that he took no heed  
Of place or way or distance, but plunged on  
Through the void night beset with evil dreams,  
Hopeless, across the immeasurable plain.

But when the dawn came, and a cold light spread  
Over the hills behind them, the King's Son  
Paused on a westering rise, looking behind  
Across the levels toward the light; and where  
The glassy keep had reared its glittering towers,  
Saw only emptiness and wavy lines  
Against the sunrise, like the air that swims  
Above a flame, or formless glints that fleck  
The edges of a crystal. All between  
Lay the broad valley veiled in shimmering mist  
From hill to hill. And the keen wind blew clear  
The meshes of his mind, and night and shame,  
Battle, Giant and Princess, and all else  
Bitterly remembered, for a moment seemed  
A nightmare whence awake he felt no more,  
Wondering to find himself so free from pain  
And breathing deep of rest. Then, seeing himself  
Horseless and swordless and unarmed, the weight  
Of his remembered sorrow fell again,

*THE WHITE CAT: A FAIRY-POEM*

Yet lightlier; for that clear breath left him still  
Doubting; and with that thought, the shimmering  
mist

That brimmed the valley overflowed, and rose  
Over him; and he turned and went on, folded  
Fathoms deep in a cool cloud, overhead  
Faint-flushed with sunrise, and beneath tinged wan  
By the green earth, and whitening all around  
So that he seemed buried in a huge pearl  
Wherethrough all things loomed formless, rock and  
tree

Shadows, himself a shadow, and the White Cat  
A shadow upon a shadow. So he fared  
Sightless for many days, knowing not where  
Nor whither, save that the ground swelled in hills  
And sank in hollows, growing hour by hour  
Rough travelling, yet it seemed the general trend  
Led upward. And the whiteness all the while  
Wavered with wreathy shapes that fled before  
Or brushed beside him, or above leaned down  
Whispering, and plucked his sleeve and pressed him  
on,

Bringing with them a momentary breath  
Of bloom or blush of colour. Yet he took  
Small heed of them for the increasing toil  
Of journey, and the trouble of his brain  
Unravelling all his deeds: he should have stayed  
And stabbed the fallen Giant; or escaped  
Battle, and seeking entrance by some wile,

POEMS

Have slain him sleeping; or in that last bout  
Fought harder, and prevailed; or at the end  
Fallen upon them ere he fled, and slain  
Both, or himself have perished; or perchance  
If he had done some evil on the way,  
Or broke some law of Faery, whence himself  
Was cursed, and his quest barren; and in all  
Lurked the arch-doubt, whether in very truth  
The princess were his Princess even so,  
Or whether having seen her in vision at first  
Gave him true right to seek and win her. So  
He toiled through clouds, following the land, nor  
cared

Whither nor wherefore. And the White Cat ran  
A white shadow beside him, making no sign  
Of service, but went forward silently  
As one that fared by her own will.

At length,  
Clambering a rocky slope interminable,  
He reached the height, and paused, and standing  
there

Fronted a firm wind, and the mist fell, blown  
Asunder, and the stars shone. All around,  
Vast mountains bulked against an ebony sky  
League beyond league, crested with snow, and floored  
With sea-green pines; as though the almighty deep,  
Heaving his foamy legions to the war  
Of the four winds, hung suddenly motionless—  
A storm in stone; and the moon, shining down

*THE WHITE CAT: A FAIRY-POEM*

Through ripply streams of cloud that warmed from  
    pearl  
To amber around her, silvered the long swells  
Of peak and pine, and carved in jetty shade  
The forms of crag and canyon, precipice  
And fissure, gorge and ridge and chasm, and swept  
The hollow vales with mystery. And the Prince  
Gazed through crystalline space, breathing the air  
Of balsamed groves; and his fears fell away  
Blown leeward, and his faith cleared, and his dream  
Shone forth once more new-born before him. Then,  
Far away thrilled a lilt of delicate song  
From that which, glimmering on a silvern ridge,  
Gleamed like a larger moon. And the King's Son,  
Plunging through fresh glooms of the piny dell  
And laboring up the further slope, was ware  
Of a pale palace all of glimmering ice,  
Whose domes the moon illumined, and whose walls  
The forest fringed with deepening green. Behind,  
A still lake held the clouds; in front, the trees  
Crusted with frost, shot forth a million fires  
Of emerald and opal, tourmaline,  
Jasper and beryl; and the palace itself  
So drank the sky and paled above the lake  
And sparkled with the trees, that all its lines  
Filmed into lights and hollows without form,  
A gem folded in darkness. And while the Prince  
Hesitated, the doors moved, and there came  
Forth from its luminous halls under the sky

POEMS

A snow-white Princess robed in azure and crowned  
With silver; and her eyes were like the moon;  
Her hair was like the midnight; and she moved  
Like starlight on a river. And she took  
His hand, and spoke his name softly, and turned  
Her face up, saying:

“ I have waited long,  
And thou hast wandered far to find me. Come—  
I weary of the stillness here.”

And he,  
Recognizing the vision of his dream,  
Yet for the memory of unhappiness  
Doubtful:

“ Hast thou in truth awaited me?”

And while he spoke, a writhing shadow fell  
Between them, and with great wings covering the  
moon,

Over the hills a dreadful dragon flew,  
Scaled all in venomous green like the bright scum  
That shines on stagnant water; and his eyes,  
Lidless, flickered unsteady fires, and forth  
Out of his nostrils puffed thin wreaths of smoke.  
Folding his leathery vans, the monster swung  
To rest beside them, and his talons rasped  
The gravel. Then the Princess, with one arm  
Over his scaly crest:

“ Behold my Lord  
And Master. Therefore, if thou bear a heart

*THE WHITE CAT: A FAIRY-POEM*

Strong beyond common love, casting out fear,  
Follow."

The Dragon swelled, and firelit smoke  
Puffed with his laughter. And the King's Son, all  
His heart heated with horror of such a mate,  
And all his manhood strung with danger, strode  
After them. But the White Cat bent herself  
Into a feathery arch, and fluffed her tail,  
Hissing hatred, and fled, and hid herself  
In the green lights and shadows of the trees,  
And would not enter.

But the King's Son passed  
Through shadowy halls lit by the Dragon's eyes,  
And chilly galleries heated by his breath,  
To a high banquet-chamber where the three  
Feasted. And ever the Princess smiled on him  
Across the board, with timorous glances thrown  
Sidelong, and starry beckoning of the eyes  
Behind the Dragon, and through subtle speech  
Of nothing, words and tones promising all,  
And thrills of understanding undeclared—  
So that his dream shone out with every breath  
Stronger and lovelier; and his wonder grew  
That having lost once, he could love the more,  
Being grown wise in loving. And he burned  
To battle with the Dragon, and triumph, and bear  
All that sweet beauty home. Yet, being now  
Swordless, and for his first failure the more

## POEMS

Certain of death if he again should fail,  
And for the Princess watching and warning him,  
Hesitated, trusting in her. At last  
The Princess, glancing where the Dragon lay,  
His scaly length melting into the floor  
And lidless eyes flickering, murmured:

“ Sir Prince,  
Thou hast a harp. Hast thou no song to charm  
The light of lidless eyes?”

And the King's Son,  
Mindful at once of many a fairy tale—  
How Dragons all sleep under power of song—  
And gathering all the passion of his dream  
In one wild harmony, his harp unslung,  
And sang across the midnight and the moon:

“ *Day sinks down to rest:*  
    *Softly falls the night;*  
        *Star-fires glance and gleam*  
*On the river's breast,*  
    *And the warm, low light*  
        *Silvers into dream.*

“ *Let us drift and dream*  
    *Here, and leave the rest,—*  
        *Earth is ours to-night:*  
*Shadow lulls the gleam,*  
    *Gathering to her breast*  
        *The lost rays of light.*



THE WHITE CAT: A FAIRY-POEM

“ *While behind the light  
Of thine eyes, a dream  
Wakes, and will not rest,  
Yearning to unite  
Sundered fires that gleam  
Hidden in each breast;*

“ *And thy breathing breast  
Falters with delight,  
And our conquering dream,  
Crowned, trembles to rest  
In the arms of night  
Till the dawn shall gleam.*

“ *Oh, thy hair agleam  
Over brow and breast,  
And thine eyes alight—  
Ah, to bid the dream  
Linger, and arrest  
The swift hours of night!*

“ *Therefore, while the night  
Gathers, and stars gleam,  
Dearest, on my breast  
Lay the burden light  
Of thy head, and dream. . . .  
Close thine eyes, and rest.”*

## POEMS

And while he sang, the Princess curved herself  
Against the scaly body, one white arm  
Flung upward over the green crest, and leaned  
Her head thereon, with thrilled lips and closed eyes,  
Drinking the music. And the Dragon's breath  
Came softer, and his wings dropped; and the flame  
In his red nostrils paled, and the sparks died  
Out of his eyes; and the gloom deepened, save  
For moonbeams glimmering through the icy wall.  
And as the last chord rang, trembling away,  
The coils fell loosened, and the lidless eyes  
Rolled upward. Then the Princess carefully  
Slipped from his side, rising, finger on lip,  
Where the King's Son awaited her. And he,  
Wondering to have won at length his quest  
After defeat, opened his arms to her  
And whispered:

“Thou art mine now. Therefore come  
Home to my Father's kingdom.”

But she said,  
Shuddering, and looking down:

“I dare not.”

She seemed  
Paler than he had seen her in his dream,  
And slihter. Nevertheless, his whole heart yearned  
For wonder of her beauty; and he caught

*THE WHITE CAT: A FAIRY-POEM*

Her hands, crying:

“ Have I not sung, and charmed  
The Dragon?”

And she answered:

“ After all,  
He is my Dragon.”

And with that, the Prince,  
His dream shattering around him, and his heart  
Black with a horror beyond hope, cried out  
Heedlessly, taking no thought of his own voice:

“ Is there no truth in any fairy tale?”

And with that word, the slumbering Dragon sprang  
Above them, breathing smoke and flame, his eyes  
Flaring blue levin, and his thunderous vans  
Volleying storm; and out of his red throat  
Screamed one white blast of fire that seared the ice  
To vapour, and the walls burst and the floors  
Fell, and the King's Son plunged headlong, far down  
Where a black river rushed beneath the ground  
As deep under the mountains as themselves  
Reared up their craggy heads from earth to sky;  
And the waters closed above him falling, and boiled  
Around him, and the flood bore him away.

All night the White Cat, wandering alone  
Around the enchanted palace, waited in vain  
Her master; but at dawn crept carefully

POEMS

Forth to the lake, and where the palace of ice  
Had reared its glimmering walls under the moon,  
Saw only emptiness; and a black well  
Yawned in the ground, and from beneath there came  
A sound of rushing water. And full of fear  
Yet feeling his presence there, she leaped and clomb  
Downward, wherein her eyes, fitted for gloom  
Where men's eyes fail them, caught the light, and  
showed  
Vaults of black stone where a black flood rushed on  
Unending. Then along the bank she ran  
Swiftly through subterranean dens, and caves  
Lapped full of surging water, where the day  
Brought no light; till at last, lifted on waves  
And whirled on eddies, before her the King's Son  
Drifted, senseless and drowned. And at that sight,  
She raised a dolorous cry, and where the stream  
Set shoreward, leaped and caught his shoulder, and  
clung,  
Mewing. And the King's Son, hearing her cry,  
Half waked out of his swoon, and flung blind arms  
Round that which, floating on the flood, upbore  
His head above the water. Then, presently,  
Long lights gleamed from behind, and on broad vans  
Winnowing the gloom, with eyes that glanced on wall  
And water, and hot breath poisoning the air,  
Over their heads the scaly Dragon flew,  
Skimming the wave, and where the King's Son swam,  
Dipped like the purple-crested kingfisher,

*THE WHITE CAT: A FAIRY-POEM*

Snatching at him, and plunged his jaws that boiled  
The stream to vapour. Then against the roar  
Of flood and fire belled out a golden clang  
Before them, and the Golden Giant ran  
Leaping along the bank, or wading in  
Smote with his mace, and howled with laughter, and  
hurled

Huge stones. And the King's Son, by the black glare  
Along the water, saw that the floating mass  
Whereby he held his head above the stream  
Was the white princess of his vision, dead  
And ghastly, her hair shining, and her eyes  
Glassily mirroring the Dragon's. Then  
He shrieked and thrust away; but as he sank  
The White Cat clinging on his shoulder cried  
Piteously; and he, past all desire  
Of his own life, yet lest by his own death  
The creature that alone had faith in him,  
Though helpless and unhelpful, should be slain,  
Clung again to the corpse, and swam, avoiding  
Dragon and Giant as he might. So they  
For hours beyond numbering drifted down  
The black stream through the dim cave; while above,  
The Dragon dived and clutched, and alongside  
The Golden Giant raged, and his dead dream  
Upheld him. And that horror turned his brain  
To madness, and through dreadful dreams he saw  
Dragon and Princess writhed in one foul coil  
Of white and green, Princess and Giant clasped

## POEMS

In a golden flame of laughter, and all at once  
Mixed in a monstrous whirl of wings and eyes  
And limbs and colours; and he heard the hiss  
Of kisses, and the corpse whereto he clung  
Seemed now the raven Princess, now the Fair;  
And within both the vision of his dream  
Glimmered, and mocked him. Then the flame and  
                  roar

Turned murmuring summer wind, and flush of dawn  
Over cool fields of billowy blossoms, fair  
With purl of brook and song of wakening bird,  
And breath of rain-washed woodland; then once  
                  more,

Struggling back into sense, he saw again  
The lurid cavern and the murky flood,  
The Giant and the Dragon and the Dead,  
And the White Cat that on his shoulder clung—  
Lit by uncanny fires and swept along  
Through glooms unending, down the unrestful stream.

Slowly as one that from the house of death  
Bitterly escaping, swims through fires of pain  
And storms of fever, and black floods of sleep,  
Till at the last his soul, returning, clears  
Faint eyes, and with a dim wonder he sees  
The strange walls of his own remembered room,  
Where the gray day, through curtains closely drawn

*THE WHITE CAT: A FAIRY-POEM*

Sickens the lamplight, and the house is still—  
Even so the King's Son, gathering his soul  
And opening weary eyes, gazed listlessly  
Wondering at the strange remembered shores  
Of his own country. Over him the hills  
Paled through a mist. Behind him, the wan sea,  
Laden with heavy clouds too dull for storm,  
Plashed, and surged slowly. In front, the sallow  
fields

Ran fading into fog, streaked with late snow  
And spongy ice; and leafless trees held up  
A net of nakedness before the sky;  
And the air chilled without frost, and fine rain  
Fell without wind, freezing; and the whole land  
Barren and brown with desolation, lay  
Sick for the end of Winter. The King's Son  
Rose, shivering, and the White Cat, that had lain  
Close to his breast for warmth, slipped with a snarl,  
And found her feet, and yawned and spread her claws  
Shaking the wet mist from her feathery fur,  
And limped beside him. They went inland, mired  
In sodden ruts and heaps of leaden snow,  
Through the chill rain, under the darkening sky,  
Where light glowed in a cottage window. There  
The King's Son, entering, called for food and fire  
And messengers; but the goodman, amazed  
At the strange figure strangely attended, railed  
Upon him for a madman, and thrust him forth.  
And the King's Son cursed him, and went his way,

POEMS

The White Cat following, where along the road  
A troop of soldiers passed, with clash of steel  
And creak of saddle, splashing the mire, and sang  
Merrily as they went a bawdy song;  
Who, when the King's Son asked whither his way  
Led to the Palace, beat their thighs and blew  
Glad oaths and laughter, crying:

“The Palace! He seeks  
The Palace! He—the Palace!”

And rode on.

And the King's Son cursed them and went his way,  
The White Cat following, where a crowd of boys  
Ran homeward, shouting shrilly, and pushed each  
other

Into the mire, and hurled wet clods of snow  
Laughing; but when the King's Son spoke to them,  
Huddled and whispered together, pointing, and then  
Ran past, and huddled again beyond him, and there  
Pointed and whispered. But the White Cat ran  
Before him up a hill, and snuffed the air,  
Looked back and called, and ran, and paused again;  
And the King's Son, wondering, followed her  
Up a long slope, over the ridge, and thence  
Through mire and snow and chill rain sifting down  
Out of the darkening sky, and stood amazed,  
Recognizing the place of his own home;  
But where warm lights had burned and tall towers  
frowned  
Saw only desolation, tottering walls



*THE WHITE CAT: A FAIRY-POEM*

Unroofed, columns discrowned, and rafters gnawed  
Naked by fire, and frozen heaps of stone—  
Black ruin. And he drew near, and sat down  
Stunned. And the White Cat, creeping to his breast  
For warmth, shivered, and the rain fell.

At length,  
He rose, and over an angle of the wall  
Yet standing, dragged loose timbers and dead vines  
For shelter. And the White Cat, creeping in  
Nestled close, and the gray lights darkened. Then,  
Numb beyond any sorrow, the King's Son  
Looked back over his life, unravelling all  
His failure, seeing how his dream was vain:  
How joy hides from desire, and sleep evades  
Weariness, while the accursed bathe in bliss,  
And over hell hang the glad gates of heaven;  
And gathering dreary madness, lifted up  
His voice, tunelessly, and while cold winds wove  
Weird counterpoint above the melody,  
He sang across the winter and the storm:

*“ Summer now is done,  
Leaf and blossom gone—  
Faded, every one:*

*“ All her lights withdrawn,  
And the dreams of night  
And the hopes of dawn.*

POEMS

“ *Wherefore shall I fight?  
I have won and lost  
All the world’s delight,*

“ *And have paid the cost.  
Will the storm deprive  
Winter of her frost?*

“ *Wherefore shall I strive?  
Neither prize to win,  
Joy to keep alive,*

“ *Nor the taste of sin  
Beckons me to prove  
What may lie therein.*

“ *Wherefore shall I love?  
I have known the shames  
And the shifts thereof:*

“ *How her faiths and flames  
Are but hollow lust  
Called by sounding names.*

“ *Honour, pride, and trust  
Turn upon my tongue  
Into shards and dust;*

THE WHITE CAT: A FAIRY-POEM

*“ All the dice are flung,  
All the tales are told,  
All the songs are sung—*

*“ Give me, being old,  
Peace from pangs begun,  
Shelter from the cold,  
Shadow from the sun—  
Summer now is done.”*

And as the song closed, the White Cat, that slept  
Against him, woke hissing, and struggled free,  
Bristled and growled, with emerald eyes that glared  
Wildly upon him, then leaped forth, and fled  
Into the dusk, and vanished. And the King's Son,  
Wondering what last horror had changed him so  
To fright the creature, raised the dingy glass  
That hung still from his girdle, and therein  
Saw not himself but that which had been he,  
Starting upon his journey; and by his side,  
Beautiful as the memory of a dream  
And sweet as hope, watching him with glad eyes,  
The Princess. Day and night shadowed and shone  
Across the magic mirror; and through all,  
The vision of his dream following him  
Over the mountains and the sea, beyond  
The gates of Faery, over the meadows of dawn,  
Through the pale mist, across the moon-swept hills,  
And down the underground river, all the while

## POEMS

Guarding and guiding when he knew it not,  
Even to that hour. And while he gazed, between  
Memory and vision, suddenly a light fell  
Across him, and a sharp fragrance, and there,  
Lovelier than he had seen her in his dream,  
Stood his own Princess out of Fairyland  
Alive before him. Her eyes were like the dawn;  
Her hair was like the twilight; and she moved  
Like music over water. And the King's Son  
Gazing upon her, felt his whole heart break  
For wonder and great love. Nevertheless,  
Mindful how he had failed upon the quest  
For want of understanding, and of the truth  
Under the heart of every fairy tale—  
That every quest is but a coming home—  
And sorrowing for his last friend gone from him,  
Said wearily:

“ I know now. Thou hast come  
When all that should be thine dries out of me:  
Why not while I was worthy?”

And she said  
Softly:

“ How could I?”

And with that, the Prince  
Forlorn of all that had been spoiled in him—  
Age, and gray hairs, his kingdom gone, his dream  
Dried into dust, his power wasted away—  
And shaming that such beauty should be bound

*THE WHITE CAT: A FAIRY-POEM*

Save unto strength and freshness like her own,  
Answered:

“ I have grown old now, having seen  
How joy hides from desire to dog the steps  
Of languor. I have sought my dream, and lost  
The power of dreaming. What life I have left  
Thou hast saved. My thanks therefore; and . . .  
farewell.”

While he had spoken, she with narrowing eyes  
And arms bent inward on her bosom, looked  
Elsewhere. At last she said:

“ Thou hast no gift  
To give me. I ask nothing. Is there none  
Thou wilt receive?”

And the Prince answered:

“ One—  
One friend, no dream, that stood with me through all;  
That could not help, but would not hide from me;  
Helpless, but would not fear. Now, if thou be  
Truly a princess out of Fairyland,  
Find her.”

Thereat the Princess with one cry,  
Half purr, half laughter, sprang to him, and back  
From her white throat the furry mantle flung,  
And locked her arms about him, and on his heart  
Hid her face, and sighed happily, and lay still.

## POEMS

And the King's Son held her, speaking no word;  
Knowing in her warm breast all fires that burn  
By happy hearths, and in her dusk of hair  
The breath of all the roses of the earth,  
And in her eyes the wonder of all dawns  
From the beginning of the world. And while  
They clung together, trembling, a sweet wind  
Blew suddenly out of the blossomy South,  
Full of a nameless joy; and the gray snows  
Bloomed, and the darkness brightened, and the clouds  
Parted, and over Winter brake the Spring.

SONNETS





## IDOLATRY: THREE SONNETS

### I

I must forget life, ere you shall persuade  
My heart beyond it. Though at last I came  
Without hope to the horror of dark flame,  
Or among glad great angels dreamed and prayed,  
What matter? Have I not already made  
Love's own lips tremulous to breathe my name  
And seen all night the lidless eyes of shame  
Stare through the darkness where I lay afraid?

I should yearn down from Heaven at the voice  
Of a strong child crying out angrily—  
Struggle up from Nirvana for the smell  
Of rain-sweet woods in Autumn; or rejoice  
To watch the moon rise over a dim sea,  
Lifting my head serenely out of Hell.

POEMS

II

If God should say: "From all my power to bless  
Choose thine own heaven, where the soul shall be  
Fired with white joy, or drowned in a sweet sea  
Of everlasting calm forgetfulness."

I should make answer: "Lord, earth's images  
Of heaven are fairer; therefore leave me free—  
Make me immortal in mortality—  
Thou hast no more to give; grant me no less."

Wonder too deep for dream; glory to blind  
The sight of angels; agony to endure  
Beyond all sense; hate, laughter, love, and fear—  
What need for other worlds? The soul were sure,  
After innumerable lives, to find  
Ever inviolate adventures here.

*IDOLATRY: THREE SONNETS*

III

Lord, for no man may look upon thy face,  
I turn from seeking thee to fall before  
The forms of thy creation, and adore  
The sacred clay of thine abiding-place:  
Yea, as a lover treasureth some trace  
Of her who will not hear, so evermore  
Close to my heart I wear the golden lore  
Of beauty, gemmed with shining nights and days.

Dost thou not laugh in every child, and brood  
In every mother? Whose joy glorifies  
The passion of new loving, and controls  
Old pain? Are not our songs half-understood  
Overtones of thy voice, and our own souls  
Images of the dream behind thine eyes?

## ANDANTE

Now gently sinks the long sweet Summer day  
    In blossom-breathing dimness. The sharp wings  
    Of chattering swallows touch with mystic rings  
The shadowy pool. The last wide Western ray  
Glowes tawny-crimson. And from far away,  
    Each breeze that stirs the timorous poplar brings  
    The moan of herds, the call of feathered things,  
The song and laugh of little ones at play . . .

All beauty. Pain and passion seem as far  
    From this calm spot as yon grim city, spread  
    Behind the smoke-topped mountains, where the  
    breast  
Of patient earth sobs to the ceaseless jar  
    Of steel on stone, the clash of bells, the tread  
    Of slumberless myriads. Here is only rest.

## A SCHOOLGIRL SPEAKS

You are not like the others—that is all.  
I do not think you wonderful nor wise,  
Make you a hero in my reveries,  
Nor bend my fancy to your beck and call;  
Yet . . . when you come, there seems a veil let fall,  
And little matters brighten and surprise—  
I am afraid of something in your eyes,  
And I am glad that you are strong and tall.

I have not given this new thing a name—  
Not even to myself. You cannot see,  
And I should hate you if I thought you knew—  
Only . . . I am grown older since you came,  
Stronger, because your strength belongs to me,  
And more myself, being a part of you.

## LOVE AND PAIN: TWO SONNETS

### I

I dreamed. And lo, upon a shadowy mound  
Love stood alone beneath a juniper,  
And all the light of heaven brake from her,  
Golden, and shook about her like a sound.  
Then, drawing nearer, by her side I found  
A sister-shape that ever might not stir  
From Love's left hand. Death-white her features  
were;  
Her lips were straight and scarlet, like a wound.

I have seen a tree, against the Western light  
Nebulous with golden glory: and again,  
Graven against the gloaming, ebony-plain.  
Even so all delicate wonders, overbright  
Upon the face of Love for mortal sight,  
Were shadow-graven on the face of Pain.

*LOVE AND PAIN: TWO SONNETS*

II

I cried: " Love, must it ever be thy price  
To find thee fostering this form of dread? "  
And Love looked at me with thine eyes, and said:  
" She is the shadow of a soul, that lies  
Within my light, Mistress of Mysteries.  
Face her, and find; flee her, and I am fled."  
And at the word, that phantom raised her head,  
Smiling. I saw that she too had thine eyes.

Then while I wondered, she drew near, to lay  
Cold hands of fear upon my heart, and pressed  
Terrible lips on mine; and as the crest  
Of some dark wave shatters to shining spray,  
So my dream swelled and shattered into day—  
And Love's own self lay laughing on my breast.

## GHOSTS

The dead return to us continually:

Not at the void of night, as fables feign,  
In some lone spot where murdered bones have lain  
Wailing for vengeance to the passer-by;  
But in the merry clamour and full cry  
Of the brave noon, our dead whom we have slain  
And in forgotten graves hidden in vain,  
Rise up and stand beside us terribly.

Sick with the beauty of their dear decay

We conjure them with laughters onerous  
And drunkenness of labour; yet not thus  
May we absolve ourselves of yesterday—  
We cannot put those clinging arms away,  
Nor those glad faces yearning over us.



“ HAEC OLIM MEMINISSE . . . ”

There is a Summer stillness everywhere.  
Under the woven pines my Lady lies  
Dreaming, with childlike lips, and mysteries  
Of light and shadow moving in her hair.  
Her faith hangs over us and thrills the air,  
And the trees know it, and the butterflies  
Flash it across the sunbeams. In her eyes  
Unspoken gladness gathers like a prayer.

Dear, in the twilight of our happiness,  
After the flame and struggle of the day,  
We shall look back sweetly on hours like these:  
Not seared into our hearts by any stress,  
But sealed with Love's own seal, and laid away  
Within the starlit treasuries of Peace.

## SOMNAMBULA

She fills her hours with fantasy, to keep  
The great hour silent: blossom-loves that fall  
Unmourned, pleasures of labour prodigal,  
And careless woes eager for tears to weep—  
Ripples on the unfathomable deep,  
Flashing with foam and sunshine, musical  
With lisping reeds and prattling shallows—all  
Busily alive; and all that life one sleep.

Laughter, and merry memories, and sweet breath  
Of days made rich by many a brief desire—  
These are her dreams. Their glimmering veils  
are drawn  
Where (O, tread softly!) herself hides beneath. . . .  
Hush! . . . Woman, with her soul of song and fire,  
Slumbering quietly before the dawn.

## FROM LIFE

Her thoughts are like a flock of butterflies.

She has a merry love of little things  
And a bright flutter of speech, whereto she brings  
A threefold eloquence—voice, hands, and eyes.  
Yet under all a subtle silence lies,  
As a bird's heart is hidden by its wings,  
And you shall search through many wanderings  
The Fairyland of her realities.

She hides herself behind a busy brain:

A woman, with a child's laugh in her blood,  
A maid, wearing the shadow of motherhood,—  
Wise with the quiet memory of old pain,  
As the soft glamour of remembered rain  
Hallows the gladness of a sunlit wood.

## A PORTRAIT

Mother and maid and soldier, bearing best  
Her girl's lithe body under matron gray,  
And opening new eyes on each new day  
With faith concealed and courage unconfessed;  
Jealous to cloak a blessing in a jest,  
Clothe beauty carefully in disarray,  
And love absurdly, that no word betray  
The worship all her deeds make manifest:

Armoured in smiles, a motley Britomart—  
Her lance is high adventure, tipped with scorn;  
Her banner to the suns and winds unfurled,  
Washed white with laughter; and beneath her heart,  
Shrined in a garland of laborious thorn,  
Blooms the unchanging Rose of all the World.

## ARS LONGA

Not thy great gifts, O God! I would not be  
The prophet honoured in an alien clime;  
Or send my name trumpeting down through time,  
Selling my manhood for a memory.  
So should I fade into the shows of me:—  
My joy become the reason of a rhyme,  
My pain, a figure in the pantomime,  
My love, a light over an unknown sea.

Give me but what thou givest all mankind:  
A little faith in that I labour for,  
A friend whose name I daily think to bless,  
A woman in whose eyes I seek and find,  
Children mysteriously mine—no more  
Than common, ordinary happiness.

## APRIL NOON

Silence. Faint warmth of the awakening sun  
Drowned in pale light. The meadows lapse away—  
Ridges of brown and slopes of sallow gray—  
To where the leafless hills are dusky-dun.  
Earth holds her breath, and waits while slowly run  
The ordered hours in pitiless delay;  
Fearing the vanished snows of yesterday,  
Nor daring yet to deem the Summer won.

As a sick woman from the house of death  
But newly ransomed, overweak to care  
For life renewed and love made warm again,  
Faints slowly back to life with each calm breath,  
Finding a joy almost too keen to bear  
Only in this, that there is no more pain.

FOR THE CENTENARY OF SAMUEL  
JOHNSON





FOR THE CENTENARY OF SAMUEL  
JOHNSON

When the slow cycle of a hundred years  
Out of the dark some golden date uprears  
Whose casual numbers form a spell to raise  
Dead virtues up amid appointed praise,  
Conjure huge ghosts out of their gorgeous gloom  
And lay brief wreaths on some immortal tomb,—  
How many celebrants completely know  
What acts deserve the homage they bestow?  
How many of the multitudes who throng  
To laud the Singer, that have heard the song?  
Or, while they hail the Artist's deed supreme,  
Dwell with him in the beauty of his dream?  
The leaders of the hour—a few at most—  
Honour a man: the people praise a ghost.  
Theirs not to ask what made the holiday—  
The priest proclaims; the worshippers obey:  
From mouldering shrines the festal fires arise,  
And unknown gods are throned in alien skies;  
Forgotten deeds their sires commemorate,  
And names remembered prove their bearers great.

## POEMS

So we to-night raise monumental breath  
To works already crumbling into death,  
Pay each unopened tome a generous meed—  
Delight to honour, and decline to read.  
Who rambles with the *Rambler*? Who hath power  
To invoke the *Idler* for an idle hour,  
Thread the great Lexicon's laborious mass,  
Or wrestle in the waste with *Rasselas*?  
Yet . . . we do well. Smile as we may on those  
Who praise immortal works that no one knows,  
We need not bear that charge, who celebrate  
No man ephemeral whom his deeds made great—  
No Artist, whose dominion and control  
End with his work—we celebrate a soul.  
Johnson has been and is: here stands his pride—  
A spirit living whose exploits have died.

Have you not known some friend whom but to see  
Was Faith, whose silence was Philosophy,  
Whose presence Love—yet bore a common fate  
And did no deed of those which men call great?  
In whom all powers burned but could not shine—  
A poet, though he never wrote a line,  
A general whose wars were all a jest,  
A prince whose kingdom was the passing guest,  
A saint at heart, who loved the homely strife  
And gay sins of an ordinary life—  
Who wore his human frailties like a crown,  
Whose humour kept his colder virtues down

*CENTENARY OF SAMUEL JOHNSON*

Lest they should leave the kindly earth, and rise  
Snow-peaked to the discomfortable skies?  
On such men's graves no formal blooms are flung—  
They live unheralded and die unsung;  
Nor can our words their secret worth convey  
To light the darkness of a later day.  
Yet there is little need. Their lives live on  
Beyond all fame that genius might have won.  
They dwell in us, to whom their frequency lent  
A Being greater than Accomplishment,—  
A joy in joy, a strength to stand unawed  
Before the storms of pain, a proof of God.

So much the virtue of a soul proceeds  
More from itself than from its actual deeds;  
So much the giver is the gift's best worth—  
The man more potent than his work on earth—  
That legendary kings deserve their fame  
But by a breath, tradition, and a name.  
Great men their eulogists immortalize,  
And shine reflected in unbodied eyes.  
So we discover that Athenian Sage  
Not on his own but on another's page,  
And by this tribute read his wisdom clear:  
That Plato stooped to be his chronicler.  
And so with Johnson. Though his works be dust,  
His words dim with unconquerable rust,  
The man lives on—a legend and a face  
Stamped on the coinage of our English race.

POEMS

What though his windmill foes be all o'erthrown?  
His heart still fights with dragons in our own.  
What though great friends his lustre overdim?  
He lived with giants, and they honored him.  
Still on the vast horizon of the years,  
Over the kneeling radiance of his peers,  
His craggy figure towers: quaint, uncouth,  
A savage bravery of homely truth,  
A courage stumbling on through toil and pain,  
A clumsy humour, and a clean disdain,—  
A cloudy pillar of sustained desire  
Which, when the gloom o'erwhelmed it, turned to fire;  
An Ursa Major, wheeling round the pole  
Outlined in stars, and every star a soul—  
Souls of less worth more visibly expressed  
Whose light keeps the great shadow manifest.

Not only those who dwell in ancient days  
To Johnson's name pay veritable praise;  
Not only they whose learning holds by heart  
The musty worthiness his words impart—  
We, like blind mirrors, hold his image clear,  
And in strange tongues bid the brave ghost appear.

*October, 1909.*

## SONGS



## A MAN-CHILD'S LULLABY

Little groping hands that must learn the weight of  
labour,

Little eyes of wonder that must learn to weep;  
Mother is thy life now: that shall be to-morrow—  
Time enough for trouble—time enough for sorrow—  
Now . . . sleep.

Little dumb lips that shall wake and make a woman,  
Little blind heart that shall know the worst and  
best;

Mother is thy love now: that shall be hereafter—  
Time enough for joy, and time enough for laughter—  
Now . . . rest.

Little rosy body, new-born of pain and beauty,  
Little lonely soul new-risen from the deep;  
Mother is thy world now, whole and satisfying—  
Time enough for living—time enough for dying—  
Now . . . sleep.

## AMULETS

Out of the dark, your eyes,  
    Beckoning far and fair,  
Under whose laughter gleams  
A witchery of dreams—  
    A fantasy of prayer—  
Making new hopes arise  
Out of the dark . . . your eyes!

Out of the storm, your voice,  
    Bidding the sea be still,  
Warm with the kindly mirth  
And honesty of earth,  
    Rousing my strength to will,  
And struggle, and rejoice  
Out of the storm . . . your voice!

Out of the world, your heart,  
    Waiting to call me home—  
A beautiful calm place  
Wherein to hide my face  
    Awhile from flame and foam,  
Feeling all pain depart  
Out of the world . . . your heart!



## SONG

Dear, though you wander over peace and passion,  
    Searching the days to prove yourself untrue,  
You cannot hide me. Still, in my own fashion,  
    I shall come back to you.

In other eyes, on lips that bid you doubt me,  
    In music, in the little things we knew,  
In your blind prayers for happiness without me—  
    I shall come back to you.

God keep you safe through all the ache of learning,  
    Through all the wrong you need to be and do,  
Till in the wise joy of unfearful yearning  
    I shall come back—I shall come back to you!

## MOTHER OF MEN

Mother of Men, grown strong in giving  
    Honour to them thy lights have led;  
Rich in the faith of thousands living,  
    Proud of the deeds of thousands dead—  
We who have felt thy power, and known thee,  
    We in whose work thy gifts avail,  
High in our hearts enshrined enthrone thee,  
    Mother of Men—Old Yale!

Spirit of youth, alive, unchanging,  
    Under whose feet the years are cast;  
Queen of an ageless empire, ranging  
    Over the future and the past—  
Thee, whom our fathers loved before us,  
    Thee, whom our sons unborn shall hail,  
Praise we to-day in sturdy chorus,  
    Mother of Men—Old Yale!

*New Haven, 1909.*

## A MAN'S SONG

Sweetheart, love me dearly—  
    Why need you struggle so;  
Keep the kiss you mean for me,  
    Hide the heart I know?  
All your truth and purity  
    Into love are grown—  
Sweetheart, love me dearly  
    While to-day's our own!

Sweetheart, love me truly,  
    And all good dreams are true—  
Life and death are little things  
    In the light of you.  
Only let your wonderings  
    Keep me strong and sure—  
Sweetheart, love me truly  
    While our days endure.

## A WOMAN'S SONG

Glad and fair is my young love,  
He to whom my pulses move,  
    He whose pleasure I obey—  
    Glad as dawn, and fair as day.

Very strong and sweet is he  
That hath lordship over me—  
    He to whom I all am given—  
    Strong as death, and sweet as heaven.

Mary Mother, grant me this  
Only, out of all thy bliss:  
    Let his longing never tire—  
    (He whose lips are ice and fire—)  
    Make me worth his whole desire!

## A ROBIN'S SONG

Wake, Pretty One, wake!  
The morn comes over the mountain;  
Tenderly, gaily, the swift, sweet breeze  
Kisses the dew from the trembling trees;  
Day's ready to break—  
Wake, Pretty One, wake!

Sing, Pretty One, sing!  
The violet blooms by the fountain;  
Under the cool of the hawthorn spray,  
Sunlight and shadowlet dance and play;  
Love, love's on the wing—  
Sing, Pretty One, sing!

Rest, Pretty One, rest!  
The sun sinks under the mountain;  
Mother-bird night, with her warm wings furled,  
Broods o'er the dusk of the sleeping world;  
Safe under her breast  
Rest, Pretty One, rest!

## AN OLD SONG

When all the winds are mellow in the glad Spring-  
time,

And bank and fell and fallow blossom-laden,  
When every breath's a song, and every laugh like  
rhyme—

Sing hey, the day for youth to meet a maiden!

Then out amid the morning,

Let Wisdom waste her warning—

We'll laugh, Dear Heart, and sing, Dear Heart,  
through all the golden day!

Red lips are such a treasure

As only love can measure,

When all the world is merry in the month of May!

When all the dark is hollow, and the wind blows  
cold,

And down the West the tawny sun is sinking;

When every word is wise, and every heart grows  
old,—

Sing ho, the night's a noble time for drinking!

Then drown the wizard Sorrow!

To-night from death we borrow—

We'll laugh, good friends, and quaff, good friends,  
until the dawn of day!

Let song and wine remind us

Of loves we left behind us,

When all the world was merry in the month of May!

## SONG

The skies are dimly bright, Love,  
The stars like pulses beat  
That falter with delight, Love,  
And the breeze is maddening-sweet—  
The breeze is maddening-sweet!  
Borne soft along its way,  
The sighs of sleepy flowers  
From bowers to dusky bowers  
Its laden wings delay.

The world is hushed in shade, Love,  
And shadowed all my heart;  
This night for us was made, Love, . . .  
And we so far apart—  
And we so far apart!  
Unheeded on my ear  
The folded whispers fall—  
In vain the shadows call,  
Because thou art not here.

## SONG

I know a bower sweet and shy,  
    Where glooms a stream  
Beneath cool films of leaf and sky  
    Where river-lilies lie and dream;  
    Where very quietly  
    Small birds make melody,  
And every breeze on tiptoe comes and goes—  
To that dim bower that no one knows—  
My bower of peace that no one knows!

I know a heart unwisely dear,  
    Where blooms a joy  
That never doubt may venture near,  
    Nor any barren fear destroy;  
    That poureth over me  
    Child-sweetness wondrously,  
And dareth wholly unto me disclose  
That gentle heart that no one knows—  
Dear heart of peace that no one knows!



## TOGETHER

Glory of a golden light over vale and hill,  
Daisy-fields a-bending to the swift wind's will,  
Summer-sweet in every breath, a bird on every  
spray,—  
And it's you and I together, Dear, the livelong day!

Wonder of a misty moon high above the wood,  
Glamour in the valley and our own hearts' blood,  
All the breathing dark alive with murmurs of  
delight,—  
And it's you and I together, Sweet, the livelong  
night!

Win a world or lose a world—peace or weary strain,—  
Summer dawn of joy, or Winter dusk of pain—  
Every time I think of you, it's like a lilt of song,  
For it's you and I together, Love, a whole life long!

## ROSA MUNDI

In a garden glad and green  
Blooms a rose unknown, unseen,  
Ruby-bosomed like a flame,  
Holy, like a holy name—  
All the world have part and right  
In the garden's rich delight:  
Each may gather all he knows . . .  
I alone have known the Rose.

Through a world of waste and wrong  
Floats a benison of song,  
Pouring on the multitude  
All their souls can bear of good;  
Giving them who know and care  
Beauty, laughter, pain, and prayer—  
Each his own realities . . .  
Mine the Singer's lips and eyes.

## THE MOON-PATH

Fair and afar and aflame in the sky,  
    Over the tide,  
Glimmers the great moon calm and high—  
    The golden sign of my heart's desire—  
Never the nearer, though I stand  
Without faith on the lip of the land,  
    Or follow, follow her endlessly  
    Over the heaving gloom of the sea—  
    Over the weary sea—  
    Over the sea.

Cold and aloof and alone in the sky  
    Let her bide,  
Pouring her beauty down from on high—  
    A river of rest for the heart's desire—  
A golden pathway flowing to meet  
The lone quest of my faltering feet,  
    And carry, carry me endlessly  
    Over the dream-dark, wonderful sea—  
    Over the foam-bright sea—  
    Over the sea.

## OFFERINGS

If I could sing as no man ever sang—  
    Find the red heart of that unspoken lore  
    That all sweet sound is only hunger for,—  
If I might call the moonlight on the sea,  
    The river-lily's dream, the soul of dew,  
To lead the voices of my harmony,  
    I should have songs, O Love, to sing to you.

If I could love as no man ever loved—  
    The seeking of the girl unsatisfied,  
    The passion of the bridegroom for the bride,  
The mother's wonder in her newborn son,  
    The boy's fresh rapture in his life come true—  
If I might compass all these loves in one,  
    I should have love, O Love, to bring to you.

## SONG

Only a little while since first we met,  
And soon the sea, with many a weary mile,  
Shall sever us forever, Sweet . . . and yet,  
Will it be very easy to forget?—  
Only a little while!

Only a little while that I may claim  
The whole soul's breath of you without denial,  
And see your eyes grow golden with a flame  
That is not Love, yet hath no other name—  
Only a little while!

Only a little while to use my art  
So that some day you may look back, and smile  
Out of a joy wherein I have no part  
On that old self of yours that filled my heart  
Only a little while!

## SONG

The clouds are drifting drowsily,  
The sea drinks in the sun,  
And it's O for the dawn that is dead and gone,  
And the deeds I might have done—  
Brave deeds I might have done!

The waning moon is red and low,  
The slow wind brings the rain,  
And it's O for the night of dear delight  
That shall not be again—  
That cannot be again!

The crawling mists are cold and white,  
The lights are blank and gray,  
And it's O for command of heart and hand  
To do my work to-day—  
Only my work to-day!

## ABSENCES

Dawn-light and bird-song and trees against the blue—  
All the lights of heaven, Dear, are fair because of  
you! . . .

But now the fields are fallow, and all the skies are  
gray;

Empty of the sight of you to light love's way.

Hearth-light and home-song, and voices by the fire,  
Merry with your mirth, Dear, and warm with your  
desire. . . .

But now the house is hollow, and all the fires are  
chill;

Barren of the joy of you to wake love's will.

Come to me, bring back to me the heart of day and  
night,

The body of all beauty, and the soul of all delight!—

Sunbeam and star-shine, roses after rain,

The colour and the melody, the laughter and the  
pain,

And all my life alive in me to hold you close again!





**MORVEN AND THE GRAIL**



## MORVEN AND THE GRAIL

### ANGELS OF THE GRAIL

*Morven! . . Morven! . . Morven! . .*  
*Blood and Water,*  
*Water and Wine,*  
*World without end: three signs, one wonder—*  
*Follow the Vision,—*  
*Follow the Grail!*

*Morven,*  
*seafaring*  
*upon the*  
*quest of*  
*the Grail,*  
*heareth the*  
*Angels*  
*thereof*  
*calling*  
*unto him;*

### MORVEN

Blood of the sunset  
Adown the dark water,  
Wine of the wind, sweeping  
Onward, Westward,  
Herding the numberless  
Rush of foam-flinging  
Surges homeward  
Whither we follow  
Over the golden  
Floors of sundown:  
One way together  
Westward wending—  
The sweep of the wind,  
The weight of the wave,  
The leap of the sail,  
And the swing of the oar.

*and will*  
*follow the*  
*world's*  
*dream, even*  
*unto the end*  
*of the world.*

*POEMS*

One way, the sun's way,  
    Onward, Westward,  
From dawn to noonday  
From noon to even,  
    From darkness to darkness;  
One way, the soul's way,  
    Out of the darkness  
    For one day only,  
Westward, onward,  
Alone down the gloaming,  
    Into the darkness.

One dream, the world's dream  
    Alone we follow,  
O my wanderers,  
My strong companions,—  
    Follow the holy  
    Angel-guarded  
    Vision, the golden  
    Grail, that shineth  
    Eternal, Immortal;  
Onward, Westward,  
    Heavenward, homeward,  
    Follow the Vision—  
    Follow the Grail!

## MORVEN AND THE GRAIL

### CHORUS: IN AVALON

Hither, O hither and rest! On the broad sea's billowy  
bosom,

Avalon, bride of the West, smiles in the arms of  
the foam;

Balm of warm noon, drowsy bird, and awakening  
blossom,

Charm the tremulous air, welcome the wanderer  
home.

Here, over meadows of endless May, the drifting  
clouds of a downy whiteness

Gleam, and the sunbeam follows the shadow under  
the bloom of purple skies;

Here the wild moon crowns the mountains, drowning  
the gloom in a bath of brightness  
Perfumed with paradise.

We have forgotten your tears. Will ye feed im-  
possible yearning

With young years, and fight hungrily, proud of  
your pain?

Come unto us, and discover the old sweet beauty  
returning

Beauty, desire to delight, lover to lover again!

*He cometh to  
the island  
Avalon, the  
heaven of  
pleasure;  
and there for  
a time  
abideth in  
bliss.*

POEMS

Knights grown weary of hopeless honour, ladies fain  
of ungathered flowers,  
Saints unvisited, and sages dry of wine, and singers  
barren of song—  
Learn the joy ye long for, join the dance of the rosy-  
footed hours,  
Laughing our days along.

SONG OF SIGURD THE VOLSUNG

The gold of the morning  
Shines on my shield,  
Her jewels adorning  
The sword that I wield;  
Clear of light and clean of breath—  
Here's a day for life or death!  
For war without warning  
By forest and field.  
  
For maidenhood sleeping  
By fire girded round,  
For wealth of the creeping  
Worm underground;  
Thank the gods, who gave the same  
To the dragon and the flame,  
That gaining and keeping  
A man may be found!

*But hearing  
in his heart  
as it were  
the voice of  
young  
Sigurd  
riding forth  
against the  
Dragon, he is  
aware how  
man may  
not content  
him forever  
in sweet joy;*

## MORVEN AND THE GRAIL

Then smite hard and spare not,  
    Foeman unknown!  
I fear not, I care not,  
    Mine arm is mine own.  
God nor man that hears my horn,  
Troll nor monster mountain-born,—  
    Shall dare what I dare not,  
    Till one be o'erthrown!

### MORVEN

Let me go hence! . .  
    I have hungered and thirsted  
    Overlong in your Avalon.  
Here is no heaven—  
    The Grail is not here!

### CHORUS

Is there another joy than joy? O lover of sorrow,  
    Surely our lips and eyes answer thine own, and are  
    sweet!

*and of the  
Grail also,  
even the  
desire of the  
soul that is  
not in  
Avalon.*

### MORVEN

Lo, in my heart  
    Heard I one singing  
Of youth war-hardy,  
Pure of pleasure,  
    Glad against fear.

*Wherefore,  
despite them  
seeking to  
stay him, he  
departeth  
out of that  
heaven.*

POEMS

CHORUS

Out of the arms of to-day let not the wanton to-  
morrow  
Lure thee away with lies. Fool, in what land shall  
ye meet?

MORVEN

And I said, beholding  
Beauty that breedeth  
Barren roses,  
And love unfought for,  
A flower without fruit—  
How shall I make me  
An end of manhood  
To lie unavailing,  
Unwarlike, unworthy,  
Steeped in sweet?

CHORUS

No more. There is no home but here, nor ever was,  
nor shall be forever.  
Over our stars forbidden heavens, under our  
flowers forgotten hells  
Warn in vain; before and beyond, the wind's unrest  
and the sea's endeavour  
Dream, and shall find naught else.



*MORVEN AND THE GRAIL*

MORVEN

I will go in might  
As a man, wayfaring  
Whither the brave blood  
Poured for sword-swing  
Riseth again  
As the rain returning  
Sunward, and turneth  
To wine poured forth  
Before heroes in heaven.  
Thither will I too  
Fare and follow  
Beyond the world's end,  
Over the rainbow,  
Onward, upward,  
Heavenward, homeward,  
Follow the Vision—  
Follow the Grail!

CHORUS: IN VALHALLA

To Valhall, O Stranger,  
Drink deep, and be cheered  
For days of thy danger  
And ways of thy weird,  
Ere the war-maidens bore us  
The heroes high-vaunting,

POEMS

*Then cometh  
he to  
Valhalla of  
the Old Gods,  
the heaven  
of stark  
manhood;  
and there  
abideth in  
glory for a  
time.*

Stout sons of the sword—  
With the great ones before us  
To ride to the hunting,  
And feast at the board.  
By the field, by the foam,  
Where our hearts were not wanting,  
Where our force did not fail—  
We have won our reward,  
We are crowned, we are come,  
To Valhalla our home.  
*Waes Hael!*

To our brothers who fought us,  
Good welcome again!  
Your manhood first taught us  
We also were men.  
By our wars without hate,  
By our wounds without shame,  
By our death without fear—  
Hand in hand, mate by mate,  
Pledge our fellowship here.  
For the love of the game,  
The strong arm that defends  
Till a stronger prevail,  
The high deeds, the hard ends,—  
To our foemen, our friends,  
*Waes Hael!*

## MORVEN AND THE GRAIL

To our grim gods, who drained us  
Of sorrow and joy;  
Disowned us, disdained us,  
Till all that remained us  
Ye could not destroy:  
By the hammer of doom,  
By the flame of desire,  
By the flood of despair—  
Ye have forged us a pride  
Either side of the tomb,  
Undismayed here as there.  
For the gloom and the fire,  
For our woe, for our worth  
Before heaven and earth,  
Pour once more the brown ale!—  
To the gods we defied,  
Face to face, open-eyed,  
*Waes Hael!*

## HYMN OF SAINT CECILIA

Let my sorrow, Lord,  
Seek thy breast;  
Never, but for thee,  
Faint or fear—  
Till I find my rest,  
My reward,  
Folded in thy dear  
Purity.

POEMS

*But hearing  
in his soul as  
it were the  
voice of  
Saint Cecilia  
hymning  
Christ her  
Lord, he is  
aware how  
man may not  
content him  
forever in  
triumph;*

Never let me weep  
Any more—  
Only lay my soul  
In thy hand;  
Only as before  
Fall asleep,  
Making thy command  
My control.

Close the world away  
From my sight;  
Let the legions move,—  
Lovers cling,—  
Hidden in the night;  
While the day  
Owns but thee, one King  
And one Love.

MORVEN

Let me go hence! . . .  
Lo, in my soul  
Have I heard one singing  
Of faith white-hearted,  
Holy in sorrow,  
Lowly in prayer.

MORVEN AND THE GRAIL

And I said, remembering  
Pride that drinketh  
Bitter water  
And power unbridled,  
A fire without food—  
How shall I make me  
An end of wonder  
To vaunt in Valhalla  
Unhumbled, unhallowed—  
The Grail is not there!

*and the  
Grail also,  
even the  
desire of the  
soul that is  
not in  
Valhalla.  
Wherefore  
he departeth  
out of that  
heaven.*

I will go in my sins  
As a pilgrim, seeking  
Whither the tears  
Of the world, forever  
Calm with forgiveness,  
Flow like a shining  
River of peace  
Before Christ in heaven;  
And beneath Him, around Him,  
Glad golden angels,  
Grave-eyed like children,  
Cast their crowns down  
By the fountain, crying:  
*Holy, Holy, Holy.*

POEMS

Thither will I too  
Fare and follow  
Through the silence—  
Beyond the shadow—  
Onward, upward,  
Heavenward, homeward,  
Follow the Vision—  
Follow the Grail!

CHORUS: IN PARADISE

Golden with hearts of gold thine everlasting city—  
Rainbow-bright with jewels, and every gem a  
soul—  
Hosanna! The Lord above  
Reigneth as a lord of love—  
Hosanna! the Lord of might that is Lord of pity  
Buildeth of broken things the glory and the goal!

*Then cometh  
he among the  
Saints in  
Paradise,  
the heaven of  
holiness;  
and there  
abideth his  
time in  
Peace.*

We have sinned and turned away our faces  
From the light we could not call our own;  
Father, thou hast sought in lonely places  
For thy children, gathered us and crowned us  
With the peace that blooms about thy throne.

*MORVEN AND THE GRAIL*

We have sorrowed where our fears confound us  
And the clouds return after the rain;  
Saviour, for thy death we feel around us  
Arms departed, hear forgotten voices,  
And the eyes we saw weep, smile again.

We have dreamed: by fitful flames, and noises  
Of the night, we fought and labored long;  
Spirit, in thy mystery rejoices  
The lost heart of dreams, the purer glory  
Shining at the end of every story—  
Calling at the close of every song.

Therefore with angels, with Cherubim and Seraphim,  
With all who shall follow and all who went before,  
Hosanna! The King of Kings  
Hath compassed His imaginings!  
Hosanna! We praise Him and magnify His name;  
to Him  
The Kingdom and the power and the glory ever-  
more!

POEMS

LULLABY OF OUR LADY

I have dreamed of strange things  
This night. Lo, they are gone—  
The voices, and great wings,  
And the three kneeling kings—  
Leaving me here alone  
Now all is done  
With this that is mine own. . .  
The Man, my Son.

*But hearing  
in his spirit  
as it were  
Our Lady  
communing  
with her  
Child new-  
born into the  
world, he is  
aware how  
man may not  
content him  
forever at  
rest;*

Master, thy high commands! . .  
Must we put forth to bless  
Unfathomed seas, far lands,  
These little angry hands?—  
Will earthquake and eclipse  
Claim, and confess  
Those little hungry lips  
Of helplessness?

Ah, hush, then! . . Take no heed  
Of prophecy nor sign,  
While I am all thy need  
Though thou be God indeed.  
What matter less or more,  
Human, divine?—  
Never was born before  
A babe like mine.



## MORVEN AND THE GRAIL

### MORVEN

Let me go hence! . .

Prayer and praise  
Have I proven in Paradise;  
The Grail only  
Beheld I never  
In any heaven.

For lo, even now,  
Even here, my spirit  
Heard one singing  
Of life new-born  
Unto hope and hunger  
Adventure, endeavour;  
And I said, understanding  
The eyes of children,  
The lips of women,  
The hands of men—  
I will go down  
Out of rest forever  
For love of the world  
To the world again.

I will go as a babe  
That is born, as a soul sent  
Forth from before God  
Bathed in forgetfulness

*and of the  
Grail also,  
even the  
desire of the  
soul that is  
not in  
Paradise,  
neither to be  
found in any  
place, but  
rather  
followed  
through all.  
Wherefore  
he will  
depart out  
of that  
heaven, to be  
born again  
and become  
as a little  
child.*

*POEMS*

To wonder and wander  
Through pain and beauty,  
Laughter and labour  
And shame, unendingly,  
Knowing and growing.

One way, the world's way,  
The sun's way, the soul's way—  
Day after day  
From the deep rearsen,  
The same, yet another,  
Westward wending  
From dawn to noon  
From noon to even  
From even to dawn.  
One dream, God's dream  
That no man knoweth  
Never to find  
Forever to follow—  
The un beholden  
Glory, the gleam  
Above all heavens  
Beyond all horizons—  
Earthward, downward  
Outward, onward,  
Follow the wonder—  
Follow the Grail!

## MORVEN AND THE GRAIL

### ANGELS OF THE GRAIL

*Morven! . . Morven! . . Morven! . .*

*Blood and water*

*Water and wine*

*Life, death, and life, three dreams, one waking—*

*Behold the vision—*

*Behold the Grail!*

From His throne alone and afar  
In the night before light began,  
The Lord let fall a star  
Into the heart of the sea.  
And a ripple arose and ran  
Spreading eternally  
In glimmering rings that roll  
Over the dark of the sea,  
As the ripple of years that flow  
Over the dark of the soul—  
Circles of weal and woe  
Widening evermore,  
With hell in the gulf below  
And heaven where shadows move  
To the shore that is no shore.  
And in the light thereof  
Are all things written plain;  
For the name of the sea was Love  
And the name of the star was Pain.

*Thereupon  
the heavens  
are opened  
unto him,  
and he  
beholdeth in  
a vision the  
Grail and  
the Angels  
thereof sing-  
ing of the  
mystery of  
God's crea-  
tion: how  
man shall  
not cease but  
through light  
and dark-  
ness, love  
and pain,  
death and  
birth, live on  
between Hell  
and Heaven  
in wonder  
everlasting.*

POEMS

And the Lord lifted up  
Gold of the star that fell,  
And fashioned a golden cup  
Thereof, and blent therein  
Wine that was poured in hell  
To waken the heart of sin;  
Water from streams that rise  
Where weary angels win  
Heaven, and fall asleep;  
And blood of sacrifice  
Burned for old gods that weep  
Forgotten. And the Lord  
Blessed the cup, and drank deep  
And set it for a sign  
In the West, and spoke a word,  
Saying: "*This blood is mine:*  
*Let him who hungereth*  
*Drink.*" And he called the wine  
Life, and the water Death.

And over the face of the world  
Fly, as the shadow flies  
Where a pillar of smoke is whirled  
Away on the wind, the desire  
Of Man, and the joy of his eyes:  
A pillar of cloud, and a fire  
Burning beneath, and above  
Veils that resolve and retire

MORVEN AND THE GRAIL

Into the light, and are gone:  
And under the shadow thereof,  
Hope awake in the dawn  
And Faith as a bird that sings  
In the dark, and Love withdrawn,—  
Follow, and shall not fly  
Beyond the beginning of wings.  
Man shall environ the sky  
And the sea in the mist of his breath;  
In the dust of his deeds he shall lie  
Down, and deny his worth,  
Falling from death to death—  
Rising from birth to birth  
Where the wind of his dream is driven—  
In Hell as it is on earth,  
On earth as it is in Heaven.

CHORUS: ON EARTH

Children of men, march on  
Beyond the veil, nor fear  
An end of any beauty now begun;  
Seeing how all that longs from nothingness  
Into desire proclaims  
No heaven but to be more, no hell but to be less  
Than ye have held most dear.  
Therefore dread not to find your ancient flames

*And foras-  
much as God  
of His own  
heart so  
imagineth  
all things  
that they die  
and rise  
again, there-  
fore shall the  
earth declare  
the glory of  
God, world  
without end.*

POEMS

Faint in the radiance of a purer sun;  
Or at the shrine of human passion, praise  
Unwelcome gods, unwillingly adored  
    By strange, cold, holy names.  
Ye shall not find them. Many are my ways;  
    My will is one,  
    Saith the Lord.

    He that hath eyes to see,  
Let him behold the tide's eternity,  
    Under the sway of the moving moon,  
Through the huge pulse of ocean swell and swoon,  
    Changing unchangingly;  
    He that hath ears to hear,  
Hearken the birth-cry of the dying year,  
When out of nakedness and frozen stone  
    Laughs rearisen spring,  
Glorified in sweet green and sunlit gold,  
With breath of wild virginity, and tune  
    Of marriage-merry birds that sing  
The coming of the bridegroom to his own  
    Once more, even as of old;  
And he that hath a heart to understand  
    Feel hour by hour the crown of his reward  
    Melt from his brow and harden in his hand  
    Into a stronger sword:—  
Nor doubt nor dream of narrower destinies  
Than to return beneath yet undiscovered skies,  
    Risen again as the day riseth again,

## MORVEN AND THE GRAIL

Reborn as the year is reborn—  
Not in some alien heaven prisoned in vain  
Where that which hath been man is put to scorn;  
But as a traveller may come  
With old love and new eyes  
To the wonder of his home.

Children of earth, dream on  
Beyond your heaven, and dare  
Choose your own gold wherewith ye shall be  
crowned;  
Seeing He also dreams whose dream ye are,  
Nor will endure to bound  
That vision by the sweep of any nearer star  
Than ye have found most fair.  
Therefore from faith to faith, from goal to goal  
Unfurl the sunward pathway of the soul—  
Ever a new horizon calling  
Over the crest of the purple hill,  
Ever amid the music falling  
A melody unremembered still—  
Ever to grow, to gain  
Wilder joy, wiser pain,  
Diviner peace to conquer and defend  
By more than mortal strife:—  
Life—everlasting life,  
World without end.

*Amen.*





## TURNS

*A new fixed form: Seven lines, in any rhythm, isometric and of not more than four feet; Riming AbacbcA, the first line and the last a Refrain; the Idea (as the name suggests) to Turn upon the recurrence of the Refrain at the end with a different sense from that which it bears at the beginning.*



## PRELUDE

Only you will understand,  
And at last I can be true.  
Oh, the ache of self-command,  
Hoarded laugh and hidden tear!  
Listen now . . . not even for you  
Have I words to make it clear,  
Only—you will understand!

## WHEN THE WEARY WINTER'S GONE

When the weary Winter's gone,  
And the birds come back again,  
And the tenderness of dawn,  
And the hum and pulse of noon,  
And the laughter in the rain,—  
Is there one to share my June  
When the weary Winter's gone?

## MISERERE

Ah, God, my strength again!—  
Not power nor joy, but these:  
The waking without pain,  
The ardour for the task,  
And in the evening, peace.  
Is it so much to ask?  
Ah, God, my strength again!

## SEQUEL

Love came back to look once more  
On the home he long had known:  
Found a vine across the door,  
Found the fountain foul and dry,  
Found the garden overgrown;  
Heard at last a tired sigh. . . .  
Love came back to look once more.

“ NUNC ET LATENTIS . . . ”

Gloom, and the sound of your breath;  
    Longing . . . and then your lips,  
And a heart that faltereth,  
    And the soft surge of your breast—  
    Then a slow sigh that slips  
    Into a sob. Then . . . rest,  
Gloom—and the sound of your breath.

### HOME-COMING

Shrive me of my sins, Dear Heart:  
    Give me of the Bread and Wine;  
Bid the waste and weight depart,  
    Bid the best in me renew;  
    By the love that makes you mine,—  
    By the God that loves in you,  
Shrive me of my sins, Dear Heart!

## CONGRATULATIONS

How can he know your worth so well  
As I, who never loved you, Sweet?  
His love shall bind you, and compel  
Your heart, his only, to forget  
Whose word first taught that heart to beat.  
He is the worthier man . . . and yet,  
How can he know your worth so well?

## WEARINESS

Weariness;  
Neither pain  
Nor distress,  
Nor a sleep  
Sought in vain—  
Only deep  
Weariness.

## REVERIE

I am very old to-night,  
And my light is burning low.  
There is neither dark nor bright  
In my seeing; but I see  
Only ghosts of long ago  
Gazing on me quietly. . . .  
I am very old to-night.

## A CHARACTER

The heart of life is hid from him:  
He has no ear for overtones,  
No eye for blended hues or dim.  
Therefore he gives a name to each,  
Dockets our laughter and our moans,  
And hastens forth to judge and teach—  
The heart of life is hid from him.

## UMBRA

In the night, the heart  
    Feels the breath of things;  
Gathers sweet or smart  
    Where the eyes are blind,  
    Where no echo clings.  
    In the day, the mind—  
In the night, the heart!

## IN PASSING

When all the world was gray,  
    And all the airs were chill,  
And Summer worlds away,  
    And senses out of tune—  
    You touched me with a thrill  
    Of momentary June,  
When all the world was gray.



## RECALL

Over the wintry sea  
I send my heart to you  
To rouse a memory  
Of hill-woods, and sweet rain,  
And the old songs we knew,  
And bring you home again  
Over the wintry sea.



**THE MAKER OF IMAGES**



## THE MAKER OF IMAGES

Sunbeam and storm-cloud over the wonderful  
Sea, whereupon ships labour and mariners  
    Hope and despair, while safe in haven  
Weavers of dream by the wayside wander

Whose hands know not the oar, nor their eyes endure  
Insurgent ocean. Nevertheless, they live  
    Not vainly, if at heart their dreams be  
One with the heart of the world forever.

Long since, an unknown Maker of Images  
Walked where the shore looms high before Pergamon  
    Fronting the sea. And while he dreamed there,  
Suddenly over the bright horizon

Fell darkness. Birds cried out, flying heavily  
Down the wind. Blue gloom, swallowing sail by sail,  
    Swung landward. The tall meadow-grasses  
Swayed like the mane of a beast in anger

Arousing. . . . Then one glare, and a thunderbolt  
Cracked, and the world went out into colourless  
    Ruin of rain, and sky and headland  
Blent with the spray of the plunging ocean.

*POEMS*

Meanwhile, amazed, the Maker of Images  
Clung to the cliff. Then rose; and at eventide,  
    Through dew-sweet fields and rain-washed wood-  
        land  
Wandered, as one having seen a vision,

Homeward, without speech. And for many days  
Carved on the new-raised altar of Pergamon  
    What he had seen: yet not the unmeaning  
Welter of cloud over storm-torn water,

But warfare of white gods, the Olympians,  
Against the Earth-Born: Zeus, thunder-panoplied,  
    Pallas, and Ares, and Poseidon  
Ranging the van of his windy legions,—

While underneath, vain Giants in agony  
Piled mountains; and alone, understanding all,  
    Foam-bosomed Aphrodite smiled down  
Quietly, out of the heights above them.

Storms pass. Untold suns, glooms beyond numbering,  
Vanish. The unchanging pageant elaborates,  
    And kingdoms fail, and strange commanders  
Govern imperial generations

## THE MAKER OF IMAGES

Of momentary dust; and the pyramid  
Follows the prince where, emulous, tremulous,  
    Like motes along the moonbeam dancing  
Into the dark, the Enchanter changes

Men, and the deeds of men. Yet through centuries  
Gone, since before that altar, adoringly  
    With arms upraised, the Pergamaeans  
Gazed, and grew stronger of heart beholding,

Their dreams remain. Still, still, as a thousand years  
Embody June, so now and forevermore  
    New lamps, new eyes, one light undying  
Hold, and reveal in a thousand rainbows.

All gods of all times fight for us, laugh with us;  
Forgotten angels cool our delirium;  
    Vague monsters from primeval caverns  
Widen the wondering eyes of children;

And knights of old, high-hearted adventurers,  
Ride errant with us, making a tournament  
    Of toil; and new-hung moons remember  
Passion and pang of imagined lovers

Whose perfumed souls in blossomy silences  
Hunger, forlorn: Adonis, Endymion,  
    Brynhild, Elaine, Ysolde, Helen,—  
Names like the touch of the lips that loved them,—

*POEMS*

And brazen-handed heroes who sang as they  
Charged home against impregnable destiny  
    Clang trumpets in our wars; and saints leave  
Lilies of peace by the lonely highway.

Pray therefore that, ourselves being treasurers  
Of beauty brought from Eden, ephemeral  
    Husbands of ageless Dawn, our dreams too  
Mould for a moment the gold immortal

Not fouled by unclean hands, nor unworthily  
Shapen for gain; nor scorned, while idolaters  
    Of deities unborn unwisely  
Gather barbarian toys of tinsel

To flatter purblind eyes. But remembering  
The beautiful old gods, and the champions  
    Of storied wars, and sylvan horn-calls  
Waking mysterious elfin laughter,—

We, in our own hour Makers of Images,  
Charm storm and day-dream into such harmony  
    As men of deeds, beholding, long for,  
Forging the world into forms of heaven.

*New York, 1914.*





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